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Vol. XII, Nos. 1 and 2

1961

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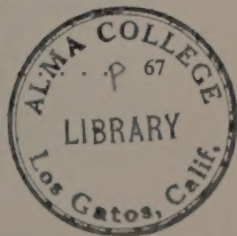
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The Significance of Judaism in Peter Abaelard's Dialogus

THE twelfth century was a time of crisis for the history of Western Jewry. Forces which in the later middle ages brought isolation and debasement, come to the surface during this period, which had so spectacular an opening with the first crusade. The rise of an emotional piety as a motive for action, and of new economic classes and institutions, narrows down the sphere in which Jewry can live and work. We must expect that these tendencies in the Christian environment did not become effective all at once in every field: for instance, well known tracts, in which the ancient controversy of Church and Synagoge is treated in a new way, show a peaceful atmosphere of rational discussion. Recently, however, Dr. Werblowsky has shown (*JJS*, vol. XI, 1960, pp. 69-77) that Gilbert of Westminster's *Dialogus* cannot be understood as a direct reflection of Jewish-Christian conversations, but rather as a specimen of a new method of theological argument. An analysis of Abaelard's *Dialogus inter Philosophum, Judaeum et Christianum* has led me to a similar change in the assessment of its historical relevance.¹

It can be concluded from a remark in this Dialogue that the treatise was composed during the last days of the author's life; it was written in Cluny, in 1141/42.² The Dialogue's introduction tells of a dream, in which Abaelard hears himself being called upon to be the arbiter in the dispute of three men. They all affirm that they serve God, but they do it in different ways. The first is, as will be discovered later, an Arab by birth but a philosopher by faith, the second is a Jew, the third a Christian. The latter two base their thinking and their way of life on the binding authority of their holy Scriptures; the philosopher refuses to allow any argument not derived from natural law, as human reason understands it. On the other hand, he maintains that he is able to find in the Scriptures venerated by his opponents reasons which will

¹ *JJS* xi (1960), pp. 69-72. The analysis of Abaelard's Dialogue was originally carried out for a lecture course at the Berlin Lehranstalt in 1936. The results were printed in the last fascicle of the *MGWJ*, 1939, which was never published and of which only a few preprints survived. The article has been rewritten in English with a view to problems of recent research. I quote from MIGNE's edition, *Patrologia Latina* 178 col. 1611-1682.

² The condemnation of Abaelard's *Theologia* at the synod of Sens in 1141 is mentioned, col. 1638.

compel them to come over to his own side; but for himself, he denies the authority of the Bible in principle, and this attitude determines the character of the whole treatise. The Christian expressly acknowledges the principle that you cannot convince a man of the truth of an argument, if you start from premises that are not valid for him³. The philosopher leads the discussion, which is carried on in Abaelard's presence. By posing questions and offering objections he induces the other two to explain the essence of their creeds. At first the modern reader is almost reminded of the eighteenth century, when the philosopher wants to know whether Jew and Christian have been led to the adoption of their respective faiths by reason, or only by slavish repetition of other people's opinions and emotional dependence on their ancestors⁴. The Jew is the first to take up this question, which he answers on behalf his community: All peoples agree that the Law, which the Jews practise, has been given to them by God. He admits that this widespread agreement is not a proof that must be acknowledged by an infidel; but he argues that belief in God as lawgiver is in complete accord with reason, because it corresponds to the postulate of God's lovingkindness and concern for Man⁵. But, so he concludes, if one assumes that God interferes at all in the education of mankind through the commands and punishments of a written law, then the Jewish Law has the first claim to the dignity of being the genuine incarnation of divine Providence. For many generations of Jews have transmitted this Law loyally to their descendants by their example and their teaching, and hardly anybody in the whole world has ever doubted that, in doing so, they carried out the *commands* of God⁶. The point of view of Judaism is clearly worked out as being the opposite to that of the philosopher, who wants religion to be based on reason. The divine Will, which demands obedience to God's Law, is absolutely valid and renders further questioning for reasons superfluous. It is now for the opposition to prove that to live according to such faith is contrary to reason.

This leads directly to another consideration. The Jew declares that Judaism hopes for a blissful future, and he tries to deduce

³ 1641 B. *Tecum vero tantum minus ex auctoritate agendum est, quanto amplius rationi inniteris et Scripturae auctoritatem minus agnoscis. Nemo quippe argui nisi ex concessis potest.*

⁴ 1614 C.

⁵ 1617 A.

⁶ 1617 A, C.

this faith from the general presuppositions of belief in God⁷. No other tribe has borne as hard a fate as the Jews have done in the name of and under the orders of God. Only the Jews have on their pilgrimage been dispersed among the nations, have no king of their own and are thus at the mercy of all kinds of affliction, so that they have to pay almost daily an excessive ransom for their very life. They are all but incapable of owning fields, vineyards or other landed property, because nobody would protect their possessions against open or secret attack. It is thus mainly money-lending which is left to the Jews for the earning of their living; they eke out a miserable livelihood for themselves by taking interest from the gentile, and, in doing so, render themselves even more open to odium. To this wretched life are added the hardships to which the Jew is subjected by his Law⁸. The very sign of the covenant, the circumcision of boys, is shameful and frightening to the feeling of other peoples. The ritual laws impede in many ways the provision of wine and meat, and the daintiest dishes are prohibited. The ritual of Passover demands the consumption of the most bitter herbs. All these facts are summed up to the following conclusion: If some one should assert that God allows the Jews to be thus enslaved without any prospect of reward, although they bear all these loads for Him, he would assert that God is definitely cruel⁹.

The philosopher accepts the description of the Jews' sufferings, but he draws the opposite conclusion.¹⁰ If one examines carefully what kind of rewards the Bible promises for fulfilment of the Law, one will see that the Jews can only expect worldly prosperity, just the contrary of what, according to their own statement, has actually been granted to them. It follows that, either the Jews have not obeyed the Law correctly and have thereby incurred a curse, or that the Law does not speak the truth in making promises¹¹.

This dilemma is meant to make the Jews realize that their Law does not contain the true religious values as revealed by reason, and that therefore it is not to be trusted. The philosopher comments further: the Law does not promise any reward that concerns the salvation of the soul; no spiritual benefit is mentioned and consequently what is most important to man is entirely left aside.

The second objection against the Law which the philosopher

⁷ 1617 D.

⁸ 1618 D.

⁹ 1617 D.

¹⁰ 1620 D.

¹¹ 1621 A.

emphasises, concerns the assumption that its existence is a religious necessity.¹² He stresses the fact that the commandments of the Torah are meant for a limited group of men only, they are valid solely for the Jewish people. On the other hand, one reads even in the Old Testament itself about men like Job, who walked piously before God, although they were not bound by the Jewish Law, which was already in existence during their lifetime. From this the philosopher concludes that the ritual Law, the specific Jewish way of life with its many prescriptions, has only increased the opportunities for transgression, but that this yoke was not essential for the salvation of any human being, because at all times men have attained the target set by God without it.

The Jew answers by trying to work out the meaning of the Law in greater detail. Already Abraham was led out of his homeland into a strange country, which was given to him and his descendants as their inheritance, so that he should live separated from the pagans. For the same reason God has isolated the Jews by the imposition of physical and visible distinctions to prevent their corruption by infidels¹³. Marriage and the companionship of the table produce the strongest links between human beings. To prevent such connections, in addition to the dietary laws, circumcision was instituted. For this operation is so repellent to the gentiles that, even if their daughters wanted to be given in marriage to a Jew, the fathers would refuse to do so. But, apart from this consequence, circumcision is important, because it represents the first connection between God and Man. By sanctifying procreation the Hebrews have obtained their eternal covenant with God, which no man possessed before them. The eternity of the covenant between God and Israel provides an answer to the reproach that the Jewish Law had no concern for the spiritual part and the eternal salvation of Man¹⁴. Could the name "chosen people" and the sanctification of the Jew, who fulfils the Law, have any meaning, if nothing was gained by it but the joys of *this* life? How can holiness and blissful immortality be open to the heathen and closed to the chosen people?¹⁵ In close connection with these comments the Jew of the Dialogue defends the religious value of the Law; for this purpose he uses the commandment to love God and one's neighbour. He quotes the classical passage in *Deuteronomy*

¹² 1622 B.¹³ 1623 B/D.¹⁴ 1624 A.¹⁵ 1627 A/D.

(x: 12-15) and recites the directions, which extend this commandment of neighbourly love to include the stranger (*Levit.* xiv: 33-34) and those which demand that protection should be offered to an enemy's cattle (*Exod.* xxiii: 4). These texts will demonstrate to the philosopher how widely the love of God and neighbour spreads out according to the biblical Law, and how thoroughly this Law encompasses the ethics dictated by natural law. It does not worry the representative of Judaism if one or other conceivable moral rule is not expressly mentioned in the Law¹⁶. The fact that the idea of holiness, prescribed by the Torah, gives so wide a scope to Man's love of God and of his neighbour, seems to imply, according to the Jew of Abaelard's Dialogue, the promise of eternal bliss. On the other hand, the promise of worldly prosperity is connected with the ritual prescriptions, by which the Law restricts the Jew's life¹⁷. God wishes to give courage and confidence to the pious by these expectations, while the spectacle of prosperity is meant to invite infidels to join the true religion. The fact that in the Torah promises of worldly reward are found more frequently and more explicitly than promises pointing towards eternity is explained by God's aim to educate a worldly and obstinate people, that had just been led away from the riches of Egypt into the desert¹⁸.

The representative of Judaism now turns to the philosopher's statement that the Jewish Law allows a certain human group only into the covenant with God. He looks upon this argument as an attack on the foundations of Judaism. The Jewish faith, he retorts, has had many adherents, who had been bred as pagans, and were originally connected to it by nothing but their inborn moral constitution¹⁹. That is how the Jewish debater explains the figure of Job; moreover, he points to an additional connection between Job and Judaism: as a descendant of Ishmael he was subject to circumcision. With this argument, that on God's command Abraham has established circumcision also among the descendants of Hagar, the Jew addresses the philosopher more personally, and reminds him of the fact that even now, in the 12th

¹⁶ 1627 D. *Ex his perpende obsecro quantum extendat lex tam ad homines quam ad Deum dilectionis affectum, ut tuam etiam legem quam naturalem appellas in nostra concludi cognoscas, ut si alia quoque cessarent praecepta, haec quae perfectae dilectionis sunt nobis etiam sicut et vobis ad salvationem sufficerent.*

¹⁷ 1628 A/B.

¹⁸ 1628 B.

¹⁹ 1626 A.

century, circumcision is still practised in his own nation²⁰. One sees clearly that on this point Abaelard has left his Jewish speaker in a weak position by allocating to him an for prevaricative answer only. In vindicating religious and ethical rules the champion of the Old Testament had frankly opposed the philosopher's religion of reason with his own belief in divine authority; when his opponent denied the spiritual and moral value of the Torah, he had countered him with convincing passages from the Bible. But he avoids dealing with the statement that a scheme of revelation which only addresses a certain group cannot be valid for the whole of mankind. The Jew's previous comments on the meaning of the Torah suggest a possible answer to his opponent's statement. He might have maintained that the Law was meant to fit the Jewish nation for a special religious task²¹. Instead, his answer limits itself to the quantitative aspect; he tries to show that the group addressed by the Jewish revelation is not as restricted as the philosopher had made it. In doing so, he accepts the opponent's system of development in ethics from the *particular* to the *universal*. The philosopher has proved by quotations from the Bible that the Torah is only valid for those who were born into the people of Israel or had been assimilated to the Jews in Palestine. This is designed to show that Judaism definitely belongs to a lower stage in ethical development²².

The arbiter postpones his verdict to the end of the Dialogue, which is no longer extant or, more likely, was never written²³; nevertheless, the discussion which follows between the Christian and the philosopher allows us to find out something about the motives which led Abaelard to introduce Judaism into his treatise in the way we have described. The two disputants of the second part of the Dialogue seem to be closer to one another in their opinions. The philosopher now claims his monopoly of truth with less emphasis than he had done in his discussion with the Jew, which was meant to bring out the contrast between the religion of reason and the religion of law. Christian and philosopher discuss mainly the doctrine of the highest good (*summum bonum*) and of evil, and reach considerable agreement on the true aim of human life. Both believe that the moral development of Man can

²⁰ 1625 C. *ut a vobis eam (sc. circumcisionem) accepisse sciatis, et tanto vobis eam quasi magis naturalem vindicetis.*

²¹ 1623 A f.

²² 1630 B.

²³ 1634 D.

attain perfection in the after-life only, when the pressure of needs and desires has come to an end. The Christian accepts the philosopher's view that the Old Testament contains no promise pointing to life after death, while in the preaching of Christ the central announcement is that of a spiritual existence²⁴.

From the start the adherent of the New Testament shows his interest in the exploration of faith by reason; he is proud of the fact that such investigations can be justified from Church literature²⁵. The whole discussion of this second part is based on this presupposition. The philosopher is put on his mettle to analyse the problem of the highest good, which had been broached by the Christian²⁶. A system of virtues is developed, which lead to the highest good. The Christian differs from the philosopher in laying more stress on God as the goal of human endeavour: the philosopher maintains that the resurrection of the flesh is not essential for eternal bliss, but the Christian defends this doctrine as a mighty proof of divine omnipotence, because God is able to transform the embodiment of worldly passions into a vessel of celestial spirituality²⁷. When the philosopher tries to discuss the application of logical concepts, like substance and accident, to the state of man enjoying beatific visions in heaven, the Christian reminds him of the limits of reasoning²⁸. But on the whole there is more agreement on general principles than difference on detail. Finally, when the champion of reason poses the question whether the return of the soul to God can only take place in a specified region, the Christian himself starts to interpret his dogma as a philosopher. He denies that the kingdom of heaven exists in space and rejects the concept of a concrete place of eternal punishment²⁹. Passages from the Bible contrary to his interpretation he wards off with the remark that the Bible must not be understood verbally, as the Jews do it, but mystically, according to the spiritual meaning³⁰.

The aim of the Dialogue can be perceived from our synopsis: the author intends to show that Christianity is the religion which announces the goal of mankind most consistently in accordance with the teachings of philosophy. The place of Judaism, according to Abaelard, is at the pre-philosophical stage of the religion of the Law, which has to serve as foil to the harmony of Christianity

²⁴ 1645 A.²⁵ 1641 C.²⁶ 1657 D.²⁷ 1664 A.²⁸ 1663 B/C.²⁹ 1664 Dff.³⁰ 1668 B.

and philosophy. This view, with which Abaelard in this Dialogue ended his career as a writer, had already been expressed by him previously in his main work on Christian theology. Here he says: "This is why the preaching of the Gospel has been accepted more readily by the philosophers than by the Jews: the former felt it much akin to themselves and never very alien, except perhaps in that which concerns the secrets of incarnation and resurrection. For, if we contemplate the moral commandments of the Gospel attentively, we feel them to be nothing but a restoration of the natural law, which, as we know, has been followed by the philosophers, while the mosaic Law is more symbolical than moral in its commandments and richer in superficial than in true justice. On the other hand, the Gospel investigates virtue and vice carefully, and judges according to the spiritual character, just as the philosophers do it³¹".

Abaelard's view of the historical position of Judaism is obviously derived from Ancient Church literature. It is the doctrine of the different epochs in the divine plan for the education of mankind, which had permitted Tertullian and Augustine to retain the Old Testament as a document of revelation in spite of the change in religious atmosphere. This historical doctrine had sprung from St. Paul's antithesis between the Law of the Old and the Spirit of the New Covenant. It was important for the further development of Paul's conception of the Spirit that the early Church, in defence of its right to existence, represented its teaching as the universally valid truth and fulfilment of human reason, in contrast to the pagan world, whose strength lay in tradition and the law of the state. In this situation the preparatory stage in the history of salvation in the period of the Law and the Old Testament was seen as a parallel to the pagan environment, in so far as it was a religion based on statutes, although with an infinitely higher educational purpose; while the perfect revelation of Christianity contained in its basis an element of rational understanding. The Pauline Spirit, characteristic of the New Testament, was interpreted in this sense, in order to create a platform for the dialogue with educated pagans. The Hellenistic idea of *logos*, ruling both *makrokosmos* and *mikrokosmos*, was assimilated into theology; thus the possibility was created to prove that Christianity was the fulfilment of all

³¹ *Theologia Christiana* II, col. 1179 Df.

the aims to attain which human wisdom had ever struggled. Truth, the eternal inheritance of mankind, had come to the earth in consequence of the incarnation ^{31a}. Mediaeval scholars like Abaelard would find traces of such doctrine in numerous quotations from the classical patristic texts—Ambrose, Jerome and especially in Augustine. As a philosopher, Abaelard was naturally intensely interested in this combination of Christian theology and pagan wisdom. He interpreted the patristic approaches to philosophy in his own way, and discovered in the natural understanding of the universe by Plato a connection between God and creation which he regarded as a preparatory stage to Christian trinitarianism and hence as a classical model for his own treatment of the Christian dogma from the philosopher's point of view. The patristic doctrine of the history of salvation by stages thus had a special significance for him: he transformed it into a new scheme, which explained the co-existence of truths from Jewish, pagan and Christian sources, and thus justified his own philosophical predilections and pursuits. Beside the Jewish Law he places the wisdom of antiquity, which is unfettered by national limitations, includes notions of an after-life, and touches on the awareness of a Trinity. Perfect truth was finally revealed by the incarnation of God in the New Covenant.

If the basic scheme into which Judaism is placed by Abaelard goes back to patristic thought, there remains the question why the twelfth century thinker has applied so much care to make the Jewish point of view as coherent, plausible and up to date as the ancient framework allowed. The answer lies in his leading position in the development of a systematic theology, which used dialectics as its instrument. Only an opponent who represented his own case with skill would give his Christian antagonist full opportunity to show his own power. Two other examples of Christian disputations with Jews will illustrate the line of development leading up to Abaelard's attitude. The first was written by the hermit and cardinal-bishop Peter Damian, who both as an ascetic and as a politician exercised a great influence on the

^{31a} On the *Logos* theory of the Apologists and its impact, see A. HARNACK, *History of Dogma*, vol. ii (1896), pp. 169-230; W. BOUSSET, *Kyrios Christos*, p. 319. For the appreciation of pagan philosophy as a precursor of Christian truth, and for the characterisation of Judaism, it was Augustine who had offered authoritative texts; so: *De Civ. Dei* viii and *De vera religione* §§ 9, 34, 50. MIGNE *P.L.* 34 col. 126; 136; 144.

eleventh century movement for ecclesiastical reform. Before his conversion to the eremitical life he had received a thorough training in dialectics with a view to his career in the cities of Northern Italy, where business and legal litigation had again started to play an important part. After Damian had changed his way of life, he came to see the learning of his youth in intimate connection with the world he had abandoned, and he thenceforth aimed at intellectual simplicity. Of this his treatment of Judaism offers a good example³². He dedicated a short tract to his friend Honestus, with the object of supplying him with appropriate biblical quotations against the reasonings of the Jews, who used to discuss religion with him. At the end of the dialogical section Peter Damian gives an accurate characterisation of its contents: "I have tried to support your weakness without inserting the dyed flowers of eloquent rhetoric and without using the pointed arguments of dialectics. Apart from the fact that I am not inclined to hanker after the features of worldly wisdom, I did not wish to impede you with copious differentiations and arguments, because I know that you, too, are engaged in worldly affairs. In presenting you with only simple examples from the Scriptures I have, so to speak, put a bundle of arrows into your quiver. I am not able to teach you how you must use this weapon in every case, considering the vast number of possible answers".—In this pamphlet the Jew is only introduced in order to pose the questions to which the biblical passages are to give the appropriate answers; he has by no means the task of supplementing the Christian's arguments by his own. Damian expresses himself very clearly as to the limits of his intention: "But just as the arrow can be aimed more directly at its target if it has been set up in advance, we shall introduce the Jew who fights against you, so that the arrows of our words may not fly into the empty air, but may reach their intended object". Nevertheless, Damian placed but little importance on these discussions with Judaism; for him the Christian's eternal enemy were the vices of the flesh, while in his view the Jews were already almost exterminated³³.

One generation later, at the end of the eleventh century, we

³² J. A. ENDRES, *Petrus Damiani und d. weltl. Wissenschaft* (Beitr. z. Gesch. d. Phil. d. M.A. viii, 3, 1910).

³³ P.L. 145 col. 68 Df.; 428, *contra carnis vitia . . insignis bellator arma potius corripere . . quam contra Judaeos, qui jam de terra paene deleti sunt*.

find the portrayal of a very different situation in the introductory letter to the Jewish-Christian debate composed by Abbot Gilbert Crispin of Westminster, who dedicated this work to his friend Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury. The abbot reports that he does not know where his opponent was born, but he knows that he was trained in Mayence. The Jew used to visit the famous monastery from time to time for business purposes, the nature of which is not mentioned; apart from this, he indulged in personal conversations with the abbot, whom he needed for some unnamed purpose, but with whom he also discussed Bible and faith in a spirit of friendship every time. One day the partners had more time than usual. The Jew developed his objections to Christianity appropriately and logically. He said that God's will, as expressed in the words of the Torah, was eternal; he explained his belief in a Messiah: he denied that the Messiah could have appeared on earth already, because the present age was still full of wars, and he denied that he could ever be God. He also criticized the Church's translation of the Bible and rejected the use of images in the Christian cult as contrary to the Scripture. The abbot knew so well how to fend off his conversationalist's attacks that the audience asked him to write the dialogue down, so that more people should be enabled to profit by it.³⁴

Werblowsky's proof that the educational background behind the antichristian arguments is definitely ecclesiastical and not Jewish, disposes of the possibility that Gilbert has given the outline of a real conversation. The antagonist's objections to the Christian faith—there is no discussion of particular tenets of Judaism—were designated *a priori* as starting-points for the development of a new dialectical method of biblical exegesis. The intention was to establish the Christian faith more firmly on the relevant prophetic passages. Gilbert was following his friend and master Anselm in his search for a deeper understanding of a faith he already possessed as a basis for any argument; but he transferred this method from the field of religious doctrine to the interpretation of the Bible³⁵. The distance of Gilbert's text and intention

³⁴ Gisleberti Crispini *Disputatio Judaei et Christiani*, ed. B. BLUMENKRANZ (*Stromata Patristica et Mediaevalia* iii, 1956). Discussion of text and modern literature by R. W. SOUTHERN, *St. Anselm and Gilbert Crispin*, in *Mediaeval & Renaissance Studies*, iii (1954), pp. 78-115.

³⁵ Crispin's *Disputatio*, *JJS* xi, pp. 69-71; 73 ff. It is perhaps not quite irrelevant that, as Southern (*l.c.* p. 96) has shown, the introduction of Gilbert's

from any reproduction of a real Jewish-Christian exchange is perhaps hinted at by an extremely cautious remark in which the abbot, after having expressed himself as ready to submit every word to the archbishop's criticism, mentions one personal merit: "But *one* Jew, who was at this time in London, became by God's compassion a Christian and a monk in Westminster"³⁶. All reference to a connection between the palpable reality—a monk of Jewish descent in the author's house—and arguments set forth in the disputation, is avoided; the statement does not assert that the converted Jew had attended the debate. But we may take the incident of this conversion as a confirmation of the report that quiet conversations, with questions and answers, did take place, and that they made some impression on the Jewish community. The development of theological thought, which stimulated experiment with new arguments as an academic and literary task, must have encouraged individual exchanges of opinions between Jew and Gentile everywhere in Western Europe, in contrast to the rising social tension between the Jewish communities and their environment.³⁷

In the case of Abaelard the pretence is not maintained that the disputation as set forth ever did in fact take place. The framework is a dream, in which Abaelard meets the Jew, the Christian and the philosopher, and this produces the impression of a fairy-tale with a serious didactic purpose. The composition retains some

parallel work, *Disputatio Christiani cum Gentile*, contains a fictitious element of a different kind. The place where the discussion took place is described as the house of Wisdom, into which the author is led by Anselm—not a real house of assembly, as was formerly assumed.

³⁶ BLUMENKRANZ 28, 4 = *P.L.* 159 col. 1006: *Tamen quidam ex Judaeis, qui tunc Londoniae, opitulante misericordia Dei ad fidem Christianam se convertit.* B. BLUMENKRANZ, *Juifs et Chrétiens dans le monde occidental*, p. 21, n. 118, traces a passage from Gilbert's *Disputatio* in the autobiographical report of an argument sustained by the convert Hermann of Cologne, *P.L.* 170 col. 807, and is therefore inclined to reject the whole story as a forgery. It seems, however, that such literary transformation of personal experience with the help of book-learning was not unusual. For Hermann of Cologne cf. MISCH, *Geschichte d. Autobiographie*, iii, 1 (1959), pp. 504-522.

³⁷ H. REUTER, *Gesch. d. relig. Aufklärung im M.A.* I (1875), pp. 154 ff., suggested that the intellectual activities of Jews in Islamic Spain gave to the Jews in Christian lands the impulse to become keen controversialists. But it is more probable that the rise of early scholasticism was the ferment which acted as driving force behind both the personal encounters and their literary reflections. (See now the chapter on *The Disputant* in J. KATZ, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance* (*Scripta Judaica*, iii), Oxford, 1961, p. 106 f.)

points of contact with the intellectual interests of Peter the Venerable of Cluny, Abaelard's own protector towards the end of his life. The abbot's attitude towards organised religion outside the Church was remote indeed from tolerance; but he was eager to obtain fresh information from the antagonists' camp for the writings by which he hoped to give literary support to conversion. For such a purpose he had gone to Spain in order to acquire a Latin translation of the Koran in Toledo, where Jewish scholars worked as middlemen between Christian and Mohammedan learning.³⁸

Abaelard once mentions that he had once listened to a Jew interpreting the Bible: "I heard a Hebrew, who interpreted like this: one coin of silver means one shekel of silver paid to the priest for the purpose of redempiton"³⁹. Although his education was strictly limited to the Latin language, some interest in the Hebrew original reveals itself in his writings, when he frequently refers to St. Jerome's treatise on Hebrew names. But no such interest in the Hebrew wording can be traced in the dialogue under discussion, and even less any influence of traditional Jewish biblical exegesis. We have seen that the treatise, including the speeches of the Jew, is planned throughout along lines motivated by the Church Fathers. Next to them, we find Cicero as a source for ancient philosophical doctrine and, as we shall see below, also as the probable model for the literary form of the dialogue. The character of the dialogue's subject-matter lends no support to the assumption that the experience of frequent discussions with Jews suggested the literary setting to Abaelard. He was a man, who took a literary interest in things rare and strange; if he had had experience of any peculiar features in contemporary Judaism, he would have said so.

I believe that another consideration is more important: It is from Abaelard's own intellectual attitude as a dialectician and

³⁸ M.-TH. D'ALVERNY, *Deux traditions latines du Coran au moyen âge. Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire d. moy. âge xvi* (1948), pp. 69-131.—Peter's *Tractatus adversus Judaeorum inveteratam duritiem*, P.L. 189 col. 507-650 promises to adduce fresh evidence from the Talmud; but his attitude is mainly significant as a reflection of increased social tension, especially in his letters to Louis VII of France l.c., col. 366-368, cf. A. L. WILLIAMS, *Adversus Judaeos* (1935), pp. 384-394; G. CARO, *Sozial u. Wirtschaftsgesch. d. Juden i* (1924), pp. 221-225.

³⁹ *Problemata Heloissae* 36, P.L. 178 col. 718 A.

from the purpose for which he uses the dialogue form at this stage of his career as an author, that we can best understand why such careful attention is here paid to Judaism in contrast to the method of Peter Damian, where the Jew merely offers the clues for the other side. Abaelard wants to establish Christianity as a philosophical religion. We have seen that he attempts to prove that Christianity owes its special position in the history of salvation to its philosophical character, in contrast to Judaism with its basis in the Law. To establish Christianity as a philosophical religion had been the main goal of his life's work. But when, in 1141-42, he wrote this dialogue under the protection of Cluny, this thesis had come to hold a special significance for him. Abaelard had come to Cluny after his attitude in theology had been condemned by the synod of Sens. Bernard of Clairvaux had accused him before the scholars of France and the Roman curia: Abaelard's rational discussion of doctrines and sacraments constituted, for Bernard, the debasement of faith by the faculty for curiosity in the human intellect, which irreverently tries to penetrate into all mysteries and to mould them to fit into its own system. In confirming the verdict of Sens the Roman curia had accepted this judgment⁴⁰. In this situation Abaelard turned once again to the Church Fathers' defence of Christianity as the consummation of philosophical wisdom, as a final tactical weapon to vindicate his own point of view as orthodox. He took over the dialogical form from Antiquity, probably from Cicero's treatise *de natura deorum*, with which the classical scholars of his time were well acquainted. This is a dialogue, in which an epicurean, a sceptic and a stoic discourse on the theories of their respective schools. Each is represented by a Roman of good standing and mature experience, who elaborates the theological or agnostic doctrine of his own group and criticises that of his antagonists. Cicero introduces himself as a young man, who emphasises his lack of firm association with any definite school and remains an almost silent listener; only as a postscript he formulates, in a few lines, a carefully balanced judgement^{40a}. Both the literary form and the rôle allocated to the author by Cicero suited Abaelard's intention. In adapting Cicero's survey of antagonistic philosophies to his own purpose

⁴⁰ A. BORST, *Abälard u. Bernhard*, *Hist. Zeitsch.* vol. 186 (1958), pp. 499-526.

^{40a} § 16 f.; iii, § 95. ed. PLASBERG, AX (Teubner series), p. 7, 14, 8, 9, 160, 26.

he obtained the means of showing his own theological attitude in the best light, while leaving his own person discreetly in the background. By opposing a radical rationalist to the Christian philosopher he is able to demonstrate the latter's moderation and loyalty to the Bible. The elaboration of the Jewish participant fitted his purpose even better. Bernard had declared that Abaelard was destroying the essence of Christianity by the way he taught it; in answer to this charge a comparison with the only alien religion existent in the Christian world was intended to prove that it was precisely Abaelard's interpretation of Christianity that expressed its essential character most clearly, indeed as well as the Church Fathers had propounded it in their apologetics. To give strength to his proof, two conditions had to be fulfilled: The Jew must be recognisable as a contemporary member of a dissenting faith, as familiar to the Christian reader of the day as the pagan had been to his forbear in Antiquity. Secondly, it was necessary that the differentiation between Old and New Testament, as laid down by the Church Fathers, should be recognisable in the speeches of the dialogue, so that there could remain no doubt as to the orthodoxy of the Christian antagonist. Since Abaelard himself figured but as the prudently taciturn arbitrator, the reader would at least not get the immediate impression that the doctrine expounded by the Christian of the dialogue was identical with the author's view. On the other hand it would not correspond to Abaelard's intention to allow his readers to forget that his own case had some connection with the problems discussed. When, in the introductory paragraph, the philosopher approaches him in his dream to offer him the office of arbitrator, he mentions Abaelard's qualifications as a profound scholar, famous both by his study of the Old and New Testament, and as a philosopher. The *Theologia*, the very book which had formed the basis of Bernard's attack, is quoted as final proof of his achievement. His enemies could neither bear it, it nor did they succeed in eliminating it; persecution could only make it more famous.⁴¹ In this way Abaelard's *Dialogue* is a postscript to the *Historia Calamitatum*, the autobiographical description of his life and career, composed ten years earlier. Both are written in defence of his work. Abaelard's consciousness of his own intellectual superiority as basis of his

⁴¹ 1613 C/D.

achievement, and his urge to communicate this feeling to the world, are not suppressed in the *Dialogue*. His belief in the orthodoxy of his own approach had always been sincere. This attitude remained unchanged, but his situation in Cluny demanded new tactics for his *apologia pro vita sua*. For this purpose he took up the ancient theme of the controversy between Church and Synagogue.

The same tendency, *i.e.*, justification of the author's work by the doctrinal tradition of the Church, can be traced not only to the *Historia calamitatum* but also to the correspondence with Heloise, of which in the manuscripts the *Historia* appears as introduction. The examination of the *Dialogue* may thus also throw some light on the complicated problem of these texts, which in modern times have become perhaps the most famous item of mediaeval Latin literature⁴². Here we see the philosopher acting as the conscientious pastor, who by the force of his word turns the passionate longing of his correspondent away from his own person towards her responsibilities as spiritual leader of her nunnery; Abaelard himself became the legislator of the convent, the rule written by him forms the climax of this correspondence. It is well known that the authenticity of these letters has become the subject of a controversy, which has lasted for 120 years and for which there is certainly no simple solution⁴³. The character of this collection of letters, which together with the *Historia calamitatum* forms a single literary composition, makes it difficult to accept this sequence of writings as the reproduction of an authentic correspondence which really took place in the form offered to us. In particular, the way in which Heloise's first letter (*ep.* 2) is linked with the *Historia calamitatum* must raise serious doubts. Here Abaelard's vigorous self-defence against a host of enemies is taken as a genuine letter of consolation to a friend in distress; this interpretation enables Heloise to demand a letter of similar type for herself, after a copy of the *Historia* had come into her hands by

⁴² *P.L.* 178 col. 113/326. critical ed. by J. T. MUCKLE, *Mediaeval Studies*, xii, xv, xvii, (Toronto 1950/55); *Regula sanctimonialium*, ed. by T. P. McLAUGHLIN *l.c.* xviii, (1956).

⁴³ MUCKLE gives a bibliographical survey on the history of the controversy vol. xv, p. 48. The most recent and most comprehensive discussion of all the literary and philosophical questions involved is by G. MISCH, *Gesch. d. Autobiographie*, iii, 1, pp. 523-719.

chance⁴⁴. But in the *Historia* the theme of consolation is restricted to a few introductory lines and a concluding paragraph: neither the name nor the fate of Abaelard's friend are reported. It must have been as clear to Heloise as it is to the modern reader that the alleged purpose of the *Historia* is only a disguise for the unusual autobiographical content of this writing. On the other hand, it seems almost impossible to understand Heloise's passionate confessions in her first and second letters (*ep.* 2 and 4) as fictions. A hypothesis, formulated first in 1856⁴⁵, which makes Heloise herself responsible for the shaping of the correspondence, may still contribute to the solution of this dilemma, if we assume that the abbess intended to achieve a similar *apologia* for Abaelard after his death as he had attempted to give in his latest writing. While the contrast between statutory Judaism and Christian philosophy was drawn to justify the theological thinker, the collection of letters offered a picture of Abaelard's practical wisdom and piety, which finally enabled him to become the legislator of a convent already well known. The documents for Abaelard's active interest in the spiritual life of the nuns were in the library of the house. Heloise connected them with the *Historia calamitatum* by an introductory correspondence, in which pieces from her own letter-book formed the core. This composition was done without regard to the chronological order. The personal confessions were used as a foil, against which the portrait of the wise pastor was drawn. The abbess could not foresee that the modern reader would not feel much sympathy towards this figure of a spiritual adviser, which she presented to the world as her master's final justification.

Seen in this context, Abaelard's discussion of Judaism appears as the product of the intellectual atmosphere among a small circle

⁴⁴ ed. MUCKLE, p. 68: *Missam ad amicum pro consolatione epistolam, dilectissime, vestram ad me fato quidam nuper attulit.* p. 69: *Scripsisti ad amicum prolixae consolationem epistolae et pro adversitatibus quidem suis sed de tuis . . . Morem quidem amico et socio gessisti et tam amicitiae quam societatis debitum persolvisti. Sed maiorem te debito nobis adstrinxisti.* MISCH, p. 630 f., emphasises the critical problem concerning Heloise's first letter.—I found a lecture by Prof. R. W. Southern, which he gave recently in Liverpool, defending the authenticity of the correspondence very stimulating, although I could not accept his thesis completely.

⁴⁵ L. LALANNE, *Quelques doutes sur l'authenticité de la correspondance amoureuse d'Héloïse et d'Abélard*, in: *La Correspondance littéraire*, i (1856), pp. 27-33, quoted by MUCKLE *l.c.*, p. 48.

of scholars in the period of early scholasticism, arising out the will to self-expression in an exceptional individual. There is no more relationship to the Jewry of his time than a literary example of good workmanship requires, in order to appear true to life. When, 125 years later, Thomas Aquinas established the world-picture of the mediaeval Church, he too put the ancient doctrine of the successive stages in the history of revelation into this context. His interest in the Old Testament, especially in its social legislation, was strong. But his argument that it represents a superseded period in the history of salvation was in close correspondence with the position of Jewry in the society of his time. The remoteness from the realities which, in the 12th century, had made the peaceful conversation of the *Dialogue* possible, had disappeared.

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Old Yiddish or Middle High German?

I. THE LINGUISTIC PROBLEM

NOBODY would deny that there existed in Germany a specifically Jewish form of the spoken and written language. Whether it be classified as a language in its own right, a dialect, the lingo of a social class, corrupt German, or a jargon, the fact of its separateness remains: It was the means of communication amongst the whole of German Jewry, the linguistic self-expression of a community with a culture that was independent of the German, Christian, culture: its vocabulary contained elements not present in German—an extensive one of Hebrew and Aramaic ancestry and a small one of Romance and Slavonic derivation—while its main component, that of German origin, was to a certain extent a synthesis of diverse dialectal material, some of which was no longer alive in German itself; and last but not least, it was written in the Hebrew script. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, at the time when it began to decline, its condition was obviously not the same as it had been in earlier times. There must have been a development leading up to that stage, and that development must have had a beginning. In looking back through the centuries to discover the time of that beginning, we are never able to say, on linguistic grounds: “here is the precise starting point of the new, specifically Jewish form of German.” This holds good right back to the time when French Jews began to settle in the German-speaking regions of the Rhineland and to adopt the language of their surroundings, so that that period—the ninth century—must be regarded as the birth date of the new language.¹

Bearing this in mind, let us consider the language of the Cambridge manuscript Taylor-Schechter 10 K 22. Its seven poems which were intended for a Jewish and not a Christian public, were penned in 1382. By that time the Jewish vernacular had undergone about five hundred years of development. It would therefore hardly be correct to describe the language of the poems as simply Middle High German (M.H.G.).

¹ This date is not based on a higher degree of abstraction than the dates in any generally accepted periodisation of a language: a language as a diachronic system is an abstraction. Cf. also my article *The Age of the Yiddish Language*, in *Transactions of the Philological Society*, London, 1939.

How then is it to be designated?

We shall find some help towards answering this question if we turn to Eastern Europe. During the Middle Ages German Jews settled there in considerable numbers; the language they brought with them underwent development and, in the course of centuries, grew into the entity now generally known as Yiddish. In spite of the great changes that took place in it, the East European Yiddish of present-day speakers is the direct continuation of the Jewish vernacular their forefathers spoke and wrote in Germany: both are thus branches of the same language. Now, if the eastern branch is called Yiddish it is only logical for the western one to be termed Yiddish too. Hence the language in which our manuscript was written is Yiddish, or more precisely West Yiddish.

Or let us consider the matter from a different angle. The main purpose of language is communication. This holds good for written as well as spoken language. The Jews in medieval Germany set down their vernacular in the Hebrew alphabet, which made it inaccessible to the Christians in the same way as the written language of the Christians in its Roman characters² was inaccessible to the Jews.³ The written language of the Jews thus served as a means of communication amongst themselves only—it was a Jewish language.

The fact that we have to recognise its existence as such will in turn affect our classification of the spoken language. Since it is the counterpart of the written form, characterised as Yiddish, the same designation must be applied to the spoken form. That does not, however, imply that this medieval West Yiddish was anything as far removed from M.H.G. as modern East Yiddish is from New High German. On the contrary, there was a large measure of overlapping, and it is that circumstance, of course, which makes Old Yiddish (O.Y.) works of such great interest to German philologists. But overlapping is one thing and identity is another.⁴ In addition, the extent of such overlapping should also be taken into

² The ability to write at all, but especially in Latin, was more or less the prerogative of the clerics. That language and its script are therefore called, in the Jewish sources, *glihut* = *galves* (approximately "Monkish").

³ Isolated Jews acquired a knowledge of the Christian script, and some learned Christians got to know the Hebrew alphabet—but this is of no relevance to our subject.

⁴ This delimitation is not based on a higher degree of abstraction than any generally accepted borderline between related languages: languages as synchronic systems are abstractions.

account. The language of non-literary texts is often highly Judaised, unlike, for instance, that of our MS. This fits into what we know of the relation between spoken and written language in general.

II. THE PROBLEM OF TRANSCRIPTION

Let us now consider the question as to how O.Y. texts should be transcribed.

For a M.H.G. scholar it might seem a matter of course that the standardised spelling of M.H.G. should be used for the purpose. However, on reflection it will be seen that this is not necessarily the best way. An extraneous pattern is thereby imposed on the material, and this prevents the scholar from uncovering new information which the M.H.G. sources cannot reveal.⁵ Is there a better way?

We shall first of all examine the relation between the O.Y. and M.H.G. systems of spelling. Are they identical, *i.e.*, is the O.Y. system just the transference of the M.H.G. system into Hebrew characters? Let us transliterate some M.H.G. examples into the Hebrew alphabet⁶ and see whether Yiddish words are produced.

M.H.G.:	Transliteration into the Hebrew alphabet	Actual spelling in O.Y.
<i>wahs</i>	וואַהס <i>uua'hs</i>	ווכש <i>uux's</i>
<i>in</i>	יִן <i>in</i>	אין <i>in</i>
<i>breit</i>	ברעײַט <i>br'it</i>	ברייט <i>br'it</i>
<i>vrouwe</i>	ורווע <i>uruuu'</i>	ורוא <i>uruu'</i>
<i>ich</i>	יקה <i>iqh</i>	אײך <i>ix</i>

⁵ Examples from our manuscript: The M.H.G. lenis *s* is spelt with *zajin*, *e.g.*, *zajmn* = *zoomen* (M.H.G. *sâme*), 'l^z' = *alze* (M.H.G. *alse*). It seems out of the question to take *zajin* as the rendering of an unvoiced *s*: it was voiced in Hebrew just as it was in Zarphatic ("Judaéo-French"), from the spelling system of which it was inherited. The same holds good for *b*, *g*, *d*, *λ*. The *λ* is especially striking, as it is spelt (for purely graphic reasons) in two ways, and both symbols indicate voiced sounds: *b* (also in Zarphatic) and *u* (in Zarphatic occasionally *uu*). That *u* should be simply a transliteration of the M.H.G. *u* - *v* seems hardly possible. As the writer differentiates carefully between *s* and *š*, it is clear that as late as the last quarter of the fourteenth century the transition from *sl*, *sm*, *sn*, *sp*, *st* to *šl*, *šm*, *šn*, *šp*, *št* had not yet taken place in his dialect. How much M.H.G. phonology will gain from the study of O.Y. cannot, as yet, be estimated. There is a very large amount of Jewish material awaiting investigation and publication.

⁶ For readers not familiar with the Hebrew alphabet, these transliterations are transliterated into Roman characters. The Hebrew signs are rendered thus: ' *b*, *b*, *g*, *d*, *h*, *u*, *z*, *h*, *t*, *k*, *x*, *X*, *l*, *m*, *M*, *n*, *N*, *s*, ' *p*, *P*, *š*, *š*, *q*, *r*, *š*, *t*.

M.H.G.:	Transliteration into the Hebrew alphabet	Actual spelling in O.Y.
<i>hase</i>	האסע <i>h'as'</i>	הוא <i>hz'</i>
<i>ha₃₃ze</i>	האצצע <i>h'aşş'</i>	השא <i>hs'</i>
<i>katze</i>	קאטצע <i>q'atş'</i>	קצא <i>qs'</i>
<i>missetât</i>	מיססעטאַט <i>mıss't'ât</i>	מישטט <i>mıştıt</i> or מישטוט <i>mıştıtuť</i>
<i>jâr</i>	יאר <i>i'âr</i>	יור <i>iur</i>
<i>mære</i>	מאערע <i>m'a'r'</i>	מערא <i>m'r'</i>
<i>retten</i>	רעטתענ <i>r'tt'n</i>	ריתן <i>ritN</i>
<i>erschrocken</i>	ערסקהרוקקענ <i>'rsqhrıqq'n</i>	ארשרוקן <i>'rşruqN</i>
(<i>bruoder</i>)	ברוודער <i>bruud'r</i>	ברודר <i>brudr</i>)
(<i>grüezen</i>)	גרועצענ <i>gru's'n</i>	גרושן <i>gruśN</i>)

As may be seen, the transliterations and the actual O.Y. spellings are utterly different. Only rarely does it happen that they are identical, e.g., *er* = ער *'r*, *der* = דער *d'r*, *vil* = ויל *uıl*, *nu* = נו *nu*.

The O.Y. spelling system cannot, therefore, have had its source in that of M.H.G., and the Jewish texts are not simply moulds into which we have but to pour Roman letters in order to turn out M.H.G. texts. This applies also to manuscripts which are assumed to have been copied from a German exemplar.

The source of the O.Y. system is the Zarphatic ("Judaeo-French") ⁷ system,⁸ which, in its turn, goes back, via "Judaeo-Latin" and Aramaic, to Hebrew.⁹

We cannot transpose O.Y. texts into the M.H.G. system of spelling. What we have to do is to express the O.Y. system in Roman characters. That would have been simple, if there had been an adequate phonemic spelling in O.Y. Unfortunately, there was not.¹⁰ One has therefore to utilise—albeit with great caution—

⁷ See my article *Jewish Languages in Essays in Honour of J. H. Hertz* London, 1944, pp. 51-67.

⁸ There is a modern parallel in the problem which confronted east European Jews on emigration to England and the U.S.A., as to how to write English words in Yiddish texts. They naturally based their spelling of these words on that of Yiddish, not of English. (There is here material for an interesting piece of research).

⁹ Cf. my article *fjn daa'merizm biz der hail in der midber ijdıy* in *Yidishe Shprakh*, vol. 13, New York, 1953, pp. 109-120; reprinted in *ıjdıy a. iutıy-bıjıx*, New York, 1958, pp. 195-206.

¹⁰ In theory it is less inadequate: although the vowels (apart from *a*) are

what is known of M.H.G. phonology.¹¹ This will not by any means result in anything like the M.H.G. spelling. Moreover, even where it would be possible to employ the M.H.G. signs, this should be avoided¹²: the reader needs to be constantly reminded not to overlook two essential facts—firstly, that the text in front of him has not been printed from a M.H.G. manuscript, and secondly, that the phonetic values of the letters in M.H.G. manuscripts and printed editions of these are not to be taken for granted.

III. SPECIMEN TRANSCRIPTION

I have made a transcription in accordance with these principles, choosing for the purpose a passage from the *Child Abraham* poem, selected for no other reason than that it happens to contain a short but complete episode in the narrative. I have not attempted to correct or emend corruptions.¹³ Nor have I tried to reconstruct the language of the author as distinct from that of the copyist.¹⁴ A great deal of detailed investigation will be needed before that can be attempted. No punctuation has been provided, but the continuous text of the original has been broken up into lines.

expressed by letters these are intended to be used in conjunction with Hebrew vowel signs. But, as in Hebrew, vowel signs are very rarely written. However, even full vocalisation leaves gaps so that sometimes one and the same vowel letter + vowel sign do service for more than one phoneme. In M.H.G. all the vowel letters are made to do that; here, in addition, most phonemes are spelt in a considerable number of ways. (For instance, the standard *ei* is written *ai*, *æi*, *ai*, *äi*, *ai*, *ei*, *ey*, the standard *uo* is written *v̇*, *u̇*, *ue*, *ü*, *ue*, *ö*, *ov*, *u*, *v̇*, *o*, *oi*, *æ*, the standard *üe* is written *ü*, *v̇*, *ue*, *ue*, *ue*, *uo*, *uo*, *ui*, *iv*, *iü*, *oi*, *uei*, *iü*, *ui*).

¹¹ Although a vast amount of research has been done on M.H.G. there still are things one does not know—an additional source of doubts and uncertainties to anyone attempting satisfactory transcriptions from O.Y. Sometimes, on the other hand, the Yiddish spelling can help to resolve doubts and uncertainties about questions in M.H.G. See footnote 5.

¹² In my transcription of 1932 (*Teuthonista*, vol. 8, pp. 197-207) there were some unnecessary M.H.G. signs.

¹³ With one exception (Stanza G).

¹⁴ Cf., e.g., lines 150-151: The author rhymed *maan*//*geslaan* but the scribe wrote *maan geslan*. A form *gesloan* obviously did not exist in his dialect, his own form being, presumably, *geslagen*. That would not have rhymed—so he simply omitted the *g*, while leaving his short *a*.—Perhaps the genitives *xater* (Stanza A, line 2b, in my article *Specimens of Yiddish from Eight Centuries in The Field of Yiddish*, vol. 2, New York, 1962) and *vaters* (Stanza J, line 4a, *ibid.*) indicate a dialectal difference between the author and the copyist.

My transcription is based on Central German.¹⁵ There are some features which might connect the phonology of our MS. with Upper German so that the possibility of influence from that source cannot be excluded. Final clarification of the dialectal conditions must await future research.

Features pointing to Central German are (in the *Abraham* poem): the form *šlaan* (in the rhyme, line 151¹⁶); loss of *n* in the infinitive (but only where this provides a rhyme: טו *tû*—lines 161, 454); the form בורן *bürnen* (in the rhyme; line 437); the word בֹּלֶן *âülen* (in the rhyme; line 442). I have transcribed the ך in בֹּלֶן as the Central German monophthong *û* (not the Upper German diphthong *üə*). I would point out that monophthongisation was not among my reasons for attributing our MS. to Central German—on the contrary: the evidence in favour of Central German induced me to transcribe ך and ך where they correspond to M.H.G. *uo*, *üe* and *ie*, as monophthongs (*û*, *ü*, *i*). The spellings ך and ך are not to be accounted as evidence of monophthongisation: the fact that ך and ך are single letters does not mean that they must correspond to a single vowel (*û*, *ü*, *i*). For either sign corresponds to quite a number of different M.H.G. phonemes—ך to *â*, *o*, *ô*, *ö*, *u*, *ü*, *û*; ך to *i*, *î*, *ê*, *ê*—and hence ך and ך could easily have had another few functions: ך could have represented also *uo* and *üe*, ך could have stood also for *ie*.¹⁷ The writers knew nothing of diphthongs and monophthongs—all of these were to their apperception just phonemic units. And to express a phoneme in writing all that was needed was one Hebrew sign. (The double ך and ך are an exception, inherited from Hebrew.) If ך and ך were used also for diphthongs this would correspond to the spelling of modern English with its diphthongs written as monophthongs and therefore regarded as such by the English layman.

An Upper German feature is *cehant* (line 382) but there is also *cu hant* (line 417) and generally *cu*, the Central German form. *Goot* (line 2) corresponds to Upper German *gân*, but *gân* occurs also in Central German and is the general literary form. Nor can any conclusion be drawn from ץ (cf. page 29).

¹⁵ Cf. *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, vol. 16, 1959, p. 51, n. 7.

¹⁶ For the convenience of the reader, the lines are quoted according to the edition by FUKS, *The Oldest Known Literary Documents of Yiddish Literature*, Leiden, 1957.

¹⁷ An analogous spelling is not rare in M.H.G.; *u* (or *v*) is written instead of *uo* and *üe*, while *i* stands for *ie*.

OLD YIDDISH OR MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN?

THE TRANSCRIPTION ALPHABET

Transcription	Original	Transliteration of original	Remarks	M.H.G. symbol
—	א	'	Precedes vowel at beginning of syllable.	—
—	א	'	Separates ך װ from adjoining ן װוּ, or from a following consonant, to show that the two do not form a cluster.	—
a	—	—	See pp. 27-28, under <i>ai</i> , passim	a
aa	—	—	See page 27	â
ai	ײ	ii	See pp. 27, under <i>aa</i>	ei
au	ױ	uu	See page 28, under <i>ai</i>	ou
b	ב	b		b
c	צ, ץ	s, Š	The affricate <i>ts</i>	z
d	ד	d		d
e	א	'	Central vowel (ə)	e
è	—	—	Central vowel (ə)	e
èè	ע	‘	Open	ě, â
é	ע	‘	Open, long	æ (ê)
éé	י	î	Close	e (ë)
f	פ, ף	p̣, P	Close, long	ê
g	ג	g	See page 29	f, v(u)
h	ה	h		g
h	ח	h		h
i	י	î		h
ii	י	î	Vowel or consonant	i, j
î	י	î		î
k	ק	q		ie
l	ל	l		c, k, q
m	מ, ם	m, M		l
n	נ, ן	n, N		m
				n

THE TRANSCRIPTION ALPHABET (*continued*)

Transcription	Original	Transliteration of original	Remarks	M.H.G. symbol
o	ו	u	Open	o
oo	ו	u	Open, long	â
ô	ו	u	Close, long	ô
ö	ו	u	Open	ö
öö	ו	u	Close, long	œ
öu	וו	uu		öu
p	פ	p		p
p̣	פ	p	See page 29	ph, pf
r	ר	r		r
ś	ש	ś	s: unvoiced, <i>fortis</i>	s, z
š	ש	š		sch
t	ט	t		t
u	ו	u		u
uu	ו	u	Long	û
û	ו, וו	u, uu		uo
ü	ו	u		ü
üü	ו, וו	u, uü	Long	iu
û	ו	uü	Long	üe
ʌ	ב, ו	b, u	Labiodental, <i>lenis</i> ; probably voiced	f, v(u)
ʌ	וו	uu	Bilabial, voiced	w
x	כ, ך	k, K	Undecided whether palatal or velar	h, ch
z	ז	z	Voiced, <i>lenis</i>	s

Remarks

As shown in this table, the length of vowels is indicated in our transcription in two ways; by doubling of letters or by circumflex.

Double Consonants

Our poem (like the others in the MS) contains some double consonants. If these double consonants occurred in *Horand* only we might have thought they had been copied from a German exemplar, but that explanation would not hold good for the other poems

because they are copies from Jewish originals. Since letter gemination to express length is unknown in the Hebrew system, it seems we must assume German influence here. That would mean that our writer (or a predecessor) was able to read Roman characters. The influence of that knowledge would have been of a special kind. For in German MSS. he would very frequently have encountered gemination, which is a feature affecting practically all consonants, and we would expect to see a reflection of this in his spelling. That, however, is not the case. He employs *ll*, *nn* and *rr* only,¹⁸ that is, the liquids and a nasal.¹⁹ Why did he single out these three consonants? Was it because the lengthening emphasized their sonority,²⁰ and in order to convey that impression he adopted the gemination of his exemplar, misinterpreting its function in German spelling? If that was so it would indicate that he actually pronounced long *l*, *n* and *r*. Restriction to these three sounds would be most unlikely, and it would follow that he pronounced all long consonants. In my transcription I have, therefore, tentatively written long consonants where M.H.G. has them.

III

The spellings *gan*, *stan* of the original might suggest that the author's own forms were *gaan*, *staan*. The spellings with *oo* (for instance, line 2, *goot*) would indicate the copyist's pronunciation.

ai

The diphthong corresponding to M.H.G. *ei* is spelt יי *ii*. The doubling of *i* indicates its consonantal function.²¹ Accordingly the *ii* corresponds to the consonantal part of the M.H.G. diphthong, that is, to the *i*, which means that the vocalic part, the *e*, is not written. Thus the spelling *h_{ii}s*, for example, is to be analysed as *h_is*. The O.Y. spelling has a stressed vowel which is never written — the *a* (*tq* = *tak*). Hence *h_is* is to be read as *hai's*.²² However,

¹⁸ ועררא וועררא *xerre'//mërre* (lines 89/90), זיננא מיננא *zinne//minne* (1.110), בור זיללן גשטילן *xorzellen'gestelen* (*sic*; lines 143/144).

¹⁹ The same selective use is found in the other poems of our codex also. But this spelling is far from being consistently employed, especially *nn*, which is rare. This complicates our attempt at explanation.

²⁰ Here the question arises as to the reason why he did not include in this group the second nasal, *m* — the only other voiced continuant consonant liable to lengthening.

²¹ Cf. the article cited in footnote 9.

²² The same result can be arrived at without knowledge of the M.H.G. *ei*: The consonant *i* between two other consonants cannot form a cluster with the *h*, because there are no initial clusters with *i* as the second element. Hence the

there is a spelling which suggests that another vowel, besides *a*, is possible for the unwritten vowel in the stressed position. The correspondence of M.H.G. *ou* is וו *uu*. Here, again, the doubling indicates the consonantal function of *u*—but the unwritten vowel here corresponds to M.H.G. *o*. This contradiction might be resolved if we assumed that the pronunciation intended was not *ou* but *au* (a form which had already made its appearance in M.H.G. by 1270). In that case the Jewish spelling rule by which the unwritten stressed vowel was always *a* holds good here, too. This would then speak in favour of *ai* as against *èi*. I have therefore tentatively decided for the transcriptions *ai* and *au*. It should be mentioned, however, that the unwritten vowel in stressed position occasionally represents M.H.G. *e*. But this is very rare and the reason, or reasons, for it need investigation.²³

v, f

Three spellings—ב, ו, פ, *b*, *u*, *f*—correspond to the two (*f* and *v*) of M.H.G.

ו *u* is written in initial position (except before *a* and *u*): ולושן *ulušN* = *alušen*, וריזן *urizN* = *arizen*.

ב *b* is written (1) occasionally in initial position: ביגן *bīgN* = *aiigen*, (2) in initial position when followed by *a* (which is not indicated) or ו *u* (that is, any one of the *o*-, *u*-, *ü*-sounds): בטר *btr* = *ater*, בירא *bujr* = *üüre*, (3) in medial position: גבלושן *gblušN* = *gealošen*, קרבונקל *qrbunql* = *karaunkel*.

פ *f* is written (1) in medial position if it represents the final sound of the stem: ווארפן *uufN* = *murfen*, קלפן *qlfn* = *klaffen*, or the first consonant of a final cluster: היידנשפט *hiidenšft* = *haidenšaft*, (2) in final position: גשוף *gšuf* = *gešuf*.

This is at variance with M.H.G. spelling where *f* quite frequently occurs in the sequences *fl*, *fr* and *fu*, while in O.Y. פ can never be used initially. The difference between ב *b* and ו *u* clearly originated from the need to avoid ambiguity before ו *u*; for instance, to write *auš* (M.H.G. *vuoz*) with initial ו *u* would result in ווש *uūs* and that would be read *maš*. The transference of ב *b* to other positions is presumably a secondary development.

The strict differentiation between the spellings ב, ו *b*, *u* on the one hand, and פ *f* on the other, would indicate that this is not cluster must be *is* and we must read *h + is*. The unwritten vowel must intervene between *h* and *is*. The unwritten vowel is *a*. The reading is therefore *haiš*.

²³ Perhaps the word ורודא belongs here. There is a M.H.G. form *vraude*.

simply a historical spelling reflecting earlier conditions, but that it corresponds to the pronunciation of the writer, who still differentiated between labial *fortis* and *lenis*. In our transcription we have therefore observed this differentiation. It should, however, be mentioned that one example appears to contradict such a conclusion. This is the spelling 'uAN bürN = *offen booren*. One would prefer not to explain that as a mere slip through the writer somehow having thought of the word *alen*.

ṽ

I cannot remember any other MS. where this symbol—a Hebrew *pe* with a tick on top—is used. Did the tick denote aspiration (that is, *p + h*)? If ṽ denotes *p + h*, then it might be regarded as a feature pointing to Central German. On the other hand, the symbol might have been a historical spelling for the affricate *pf*,—an Upper German feature. The symbol is used also in words like אַנפֿינק 'nṽinq = *enpfink*. Here it can hardly stand for anything but *pf* (< *tf*). This makes the value *pf* likely—though not certain—also for words with ṽ < *p*.

Comparative Table of the M.H.G. Standard Spelling
and the Transcription Alphabet

a	—	a	iu	—	üü
â	—	oo; aa	j	—	i
ä	—	è	k	—	k
æ	—	èè	l	—	l
b	—	b	m	—	m
c	—	k	n	—	n
ch	—	x	o	—	o
d	—	d	ô	—	ô
e	—	e	ö	—	ö
ê	—	é	œ	—	œ
ë	—	è	ou	—	au
ê	—	ée; èè	öu	—	öu
f	—	f, ^Λ	ṽ	—	ṽ
g	—	g	pf, ph	—	ṽ
h	—	h; ḥ; x	q	—	k
i	—	i	r	—	r
î	—	ii	s	—	z; š
ie	—	î	sch	—	š

t	—	t	üe	—	û
u	—	u; f, ʌ	v	—	ʌ
û	—	uu	w	—	ʌ
ü	—	ü	z	—	c
uo	—	û	ʒ	—	š

THE TEXT

From fols. 15v—16r²⁴

- (A) dô spr[ax] ès zix nimrôd dèr dô gemaldik ma's
 zage ʌil zinnen lôzeš kint mèr hoot dir gerooten daš
 daš du dize gote hoost ʌor brant oone šulden
 dèš mûstu kint dî zèlbe ʌème dulden
- (B) ioo mooren ès nixt gote spr[ax] daš kint cu hant
 ... maxte zi miin ʌater mit ziin zèlbeš hant
 dî gote dî miin ʌater maxen kan dèr haan ix lüccel axte
 dèr išt g[ot] dèr miinen ʌater maxte
- (C) dèr g[ot] dèr dô gešûf dî miite mèrelt al
 baide laup un[de] graš bèrk un[de] tal
 an ziime gelauben wil ix lèben un[t] štèrben
 ix getraume ime mol èr léét mix nixt ʌor dèrben
- (D) dô spr[ax] ès zix nimrôd dèn g[ot] du hoost erkant
 mak dix dèr gelôzen ʌon unzer aller hant
 daš du mûst genèzen ʌor dizeme štarken ʌüüre
 zô wil ix diinen gelauben kaufen tüüre
- (E) gešûx bant mart daš ʌil klaine kindliin
 zi maxten ainen oʌen haš un[t] murfen ès dar in
 èš lak alze ain knaumeliin cû zamene gemunden
 bii blik aineš augen zô mart ès enpunden

²⁴ See L. FUKS, *The Oldest Known Literary Documents of Yiddish Literature*, Leiden, pp. 60-65, lines 412-461. Cf. H. BEEM (*Yidische Shprakh*, 1960, 9-16), S. A. BIRNBAUM (*Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 1959 50-52), J. CARLES (*Études Germaniques*, 1958, 348-351), L. FORSTER (*German Life and Letters*, 1958, 276-285), J. FOURQUET (*Études Germaniques*, 1959, 50-56), P. GANZ (*Journal of Jewish Studies*, 8, 1957, 246-248), C. GININGER (*The Field of Yiddish*, 1954, 275-277), J. W. MARCHAND (*Word*, 1959, 383-394), H. NEUMANN (*Festschrift W. Krause* 1960, 145-165), G. SCHRAMM (*Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1958, 211-221), I. SCHRÖBLER (*Zeitschrift f. deutsches Altertum und Literatur*, 1959, 135-162), W. SCHWARZ (*Neophilologus*, 1958, 327-332), M. WEINREICH (*Word*, 1960, 100-118).

- (F) dô gînk dèr hailige mixooé[l] ʌor unzeren lîben trèxtin 'staan
 èr špr[ax] ʌil lîber hère g[ot] nu looš mix dare gaan
 ix kan in mol erlôzen un[de] dî vor bûrnen
 dî dix aller tèglix ercûrnen
- (G) dô špr[ax] dèr hailige gaṛrié[l] ʌil lîber hère miin
 nu looš mix dare gaan ix ʌil diin bote ziin
 ix kan dèn glüienden oʌen harte mol erkûlen
 daš diin ʌrüünt²⁵ dèr hicce nixt mirt ʌûlen
- (H) dô špr[ax] unzer lîber trèxtin ioo hoot èr mix erkant
 ix ʌil in erlôzen mit miin zèlbeš hant
 ix ʌil kainen boten an miine štat dare zènden
 zèlber wil ix ziine tat ʌol énden
- (J) dème lîben trauwen kinde dî g[oteš] éére eršain
 dèr oʌen luuxte inen (?) alze ain karʌunkel štain
 dî brénd[e] un[de] dî hicce begunnen her ʌüre dringen
 dî haidenšaft mûste alle ʌon dannen špringen
- (K) dô špr[ax] unzer lîber trèxtin dème carten kinde cû
 ix haan dix erlôzet miin haise šoltu tû
 du šolt miineš milen ʌarten un[de] roomen
 zô šterke ix dix un[t] méére diinen zoomen
- (L) dème kinde ʌart geuffnet dèš zèlben oʌenš tür
 èš štünt uuf ʌil liize un[t] maxte zix hin ʌür
 ime luuxten ziine augen alze dèr liixte morgen šterne
 daš zax dèr arme bildenèère ʌil gèrne.

London

SOLOMON A. BIRNBAUM

²⁵ MS here has the meaningless *burnt*, apparently a slip for *urunt* = ʌrüünt. This would accord with the traditional designation for Abraham as "friend of God"; cf. in the daily morning liturgy: "we—the sons of Abraham, thy loving friend". (Islam has taken over this designation for Abraham, speaking of him as "the friend" or "the friend of Allah").

A Christian Report from Constantinople regarding Shabbethai Şevi (1666)

PROF. G. Scholem in his comprehensive study of Shabbethai Şevi¹ has well-nigh exhausted all known sources relating to the history of the Messiah of Smyrna, his movement, and its impact on history. The vast ramifications of the events of 1666 and the considerable curiosity they aroused manifested themselves among other things in the great number of reports, descriptions, pamphlets etc., written at that time by Jews and Gentiles both in the East and in Europe. Many of these are of great rarity, both in manuscript and in print. It is therefore only to be expected that part of this literature still remains hidden away in archives and libraries. Such is the case with the "Report from Constantinople" published below.

Christian eye-witnesses in Constantinople kept their correspondents in Europe abreast of events, and their several prejudices naturally coloured their accounts. While some Protestants, particularly in England, received the reports on Shabbethai Şevi and his messianic movement with some enthusiasm, these were generally viewed with disfavour in Roman Catholic circles. Some reports were written by members of the Jesuit mission in Constantinople, and were afterwards circulated in print (similarly to those from other sources). They were distributed to spread the tale of the "false Messiah of the Jews", to uphold the Christian faith, and to ridicule the Jew as being an infidel.

Some of the reports and pamphlets were discovered by Prof. Scholem and utilised by him in his *Shabbethai Şevi*². Among them is the *Lettera mandata da Constantinopoli a Roma intorno al nuovo Messia degli Ebrei*, written in October 1666 and published in 1667³. Another copy of this letter, entitled *Relazione curiosissima ed insieme verissima del strano successo del preteso Messia degli Ebrei, il quale cagionò tanta commozione in quella Nazione e terminò poi con farsi Turco, in Venezia ed in Parma, per il Gozzi* (undated, 4^o; pp. 4), was recently discovered by the present writer in the Jewish Community Archives in Mantua⁴. This has the

¹ Hebrew ed., 2 vols., Tel Aviv, 1957.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 833 f.

³ *Ibid.*, No. 73. There exists also a Portuguese translation of this pamphlet.

⁴ Filza 109 Doc. 51. Cf. my *History of the Jews in the Duchy of Mantua* (in course of publication).

subtitle *Lettera mandata da Costantinopoli a Roma intorno al nuovo Messia degli Ebrei, dal Padre Beccaranda Gesuita*. Another pamphlet, discovered by Prof. Scholem, is the *Relation de la véritable Imposture du faux Messie des Juifs etc.*, written at Constantinople on 22nd November, 1666, and printed at Avignon in 1667⁵. According to the title-page it was written by a Catholic priest and sent by him to his friends at Marseilles.

In attempting to establish the identity of Padre Beccaranda the present writer had occasion to visit the archives of the Society of Jesus in Rome⁶. There it transpired that Beccaranda is the Italianised name of Jacobus Becherand, member of the Jesuit mission to Constantinople from 1660 to 1667⁷. In a volume of correspondence from members of the mission in the East to the centre in Paris there is a letter from Constantinople of the 15th December, 1666. It contains a full report on Shabbethai Ševi and his movement until after his apostasy. It is unsigned, and the writer states that at the time of writing he had been four years in "these parts". It contains 16 pages, written in a clear Italian hand of the 17th century. From the absence of a signature it would appear

⁵ SCHOLEM, *op. cit.*, p. 834, No. 50.

⁶ I am greatly indebted to the Society of Jesus, and especially to Father Josef Teschitel, Director of the Archivium Romanum of the Society of Jesus, for their cordial assistance and for granting me permission to publish the "Report from Constantinople".

⁷ *Archives of the Society of Jesus, Francia*, Catal. BREVES, Vol. 23, fol. 135, including several of his letters. According to *Triennales Francia*, Vol. 14, fol. 21v., No. 155, he was born on 3rd May, 1622 at "Occitanus", and took holy orders on 14th Feb., 1642. According to "Missionaires Jesuites du Levant dans L'Ancienne Compagnie, 1523-1820", in *Cat., Francia* 21a, there were three members of the mission in Constantinople who had come to that city in 1663, and could qualify as having been there four years at the end of 1666. (1) P. Alexander Du Vigneau, born at Pau on 15th December 1631. Joined the order on 27th October 1651. Went to Constantinople in 1663. Returned to France in 1672. Died in his native city on 30th May 1683. (*Cat., Francia* 21a pp. 70-1, No. 658). (2) P. Robert Saulger (also Sauger). Born in Paris on 3rd (or 14th) July 1637. Joined the order in Paris on 9th October 1657. Went to Constantinople in 1663. Again in France 1671-8. Died at Naxos on 14th September 1709. (*Cat., Francia* 21a, pp. 64-5, No. 549). (3) P. Vincentius Ballachi. Born at Ragusa on 14th February 1600. Joined the order in Rome on 15th April 1649. Went to Constantinople in 1663. Returned to Ragusa in 1669 and died there on 29th April 1676. (*Cat., Francia* 21a, pp. 6-7, No. 45). Ballachi was the only Italian among the three, and therefore we may perhaps assume that he was the author of our report. However, it is not in his handwriting. If the report was a copy (there are some corrections in another hand) it was apparently made in Turkey, since the watermark is in the shape of a crescent. Other letters from P. Ballachi are not written on this type of paper. This information was kindly furnished me by Father Josef Teschitel S.J.

to be either a copy or a translation of the original letter⁸.

The writer mentions previous letters, which contained news about Shabbethai Ševi and promises to make a full report in due course. He had postponed reporting until December, in order to await further developments and to collect all information available to him. He states that he had discounted unfounded rumours and based his report on the testimony of reliable witnesses.

He starts his account with a short biography of Shabbethai Ševi, who (according to him) was born in 1625 in Smyrna, as the eldest son of Mordecai Ševi. The father had immigrated from Morea to Smyrna, and had changed over from the sale of meats to acting as an agent in the service of the English merchants in Smyrna. He describes Shabbethai as being talented and vivacious by nature, well versed in Jewish lore including the *Kabbalah*, and that in consequence he was admired by the Jews as one of the most learned and wise men in the world. He adds that Shabbethai was physically attractive and of pleasing manners. After a tour of Greece Shabbethai came to Constantinople for the first time in 1658. He stayed there for less than a year, and demonstrated his erudition and saintliness. The children and the poor acclaimed him for his lavishness: finally the leaders of the Jewish Community, fearing repercussions from the Turks at the appearance of a non-Moslem saint or prophet, made him return to Smyrna. There a similar situation developed, and he decided to go to Cairo, whence he went to Jerusalem after collecting alms for the poor of the Holy Land. He remained in those parts until he was acclaimed Messiah and returned to Smyrna and from there to Constantinople. These details coincide more or less with those known about Shabbethai Ševi from other sources⁹.

The report then goes on to relate the story of the young prophetess of Galata, who was said to have had a vision of an angel announcing the coming of the Messiah¹⁰. Two other miracles were also said to have occurred at that time. One was about an angel, who struck the sun with his sword, turning it black as coal; and then touched it again, making it shine brighter than before. The

⁸ *Ibid.*, Gal. 104, fol. 40r-47v.

⁹ SCHOLIM, *op. cit.*, p. 83 f. Some errors common to other Christian reports are also to be found here, such as Shabbethai's being the eldest son of Mordecai Ševi.

¹⁰ *Relation de la véritable Imposture*, p. 5.

other miracle concerned three stars fighting in the sky over the Sultan's palace. One thrust the other two to the bottom of the sea, and then shone triumphantly on the firmament. These visions and miracles were meant to symbolise the victory of Judaism over Christianity and Mohammedanism, and went a long way towards convincing many Jews that the Messiah had really come.

At this point the writer describes Nathan of Gaza¹¹, his prophecies about the coming of the Messiah, and his meeting with Shabbethai Şevi in Gaza. The latter at first refused the title conferred on him by Nathan, but was soon convinced and started out on his mission, while Nathan spread the good tidings abroad. Shabbethai returned to Smyrna and was enthusiastically acclaimed by the Jews everywhere. There were some sceptics among the Jews, but they carried no weight; and those who declared their disbelief openly were persecuted. Nathan's letters and the stories spread about Shabbethai added to the belief in his saintliness and his mission. His followers adduced as proof his personal conduct the miracles attributed to him, the prophecies predicting the imminent redemption of the Jews etc. Shabbethai's strange marital experiences and especially his marriage to Sarah appear to have made a great impression: the writer of the report relates the tale about her unsavoury antecedents which was current among some sections of the opposition to the movement¹².

The report then goes on to narrate the tales about the mysterious army on the march from the East to assist the Messiah in the execution of his mission. Mention is also made of Shabbethai's religious reforms, the fervour of his followers, and the neglect on the part of the Jews of Constantinople and elsewhere of their affairs. The writer then tells of Shabbethai's arrival in Constantinople, his arrest, and the stupefaction resulting from it amongst the Jews. He describes the turn of events with considerable glee, and expresses his gratification at the mortification of the Jews who previously had been conducting themselves with arrogance, and had threatened Moslems and Christians with the forthcoming revival of their political power. He relates the encounter between another member of the Jesuit mission and a Jew. The Jew first threatened the Jesuit with the dire consequences of disbelief in

¹¹ Like the author of the *Relation* he calls him Nathan Benjamin, a name bestowed on him by Shabbethai Şevi.

¹² SCHOLEM, *op. cit.*, p. 145 f.; *Relation*, pp. 10, 14.

Shabbethai Şevi, and his ultimate victory, and then accepted the Jesuit's challenge to embrace Christianity if events should prove him wrong. But the Jew failed to carry out his part of the bargain . . . ¹³.

This is followed by a description of Sabbatai's interview with the Grand Vizier (Ahmed Köprülü). The writer's explanation for the inexplicable escape of Shabbethai Şevi from capital punishment at this juncture is that he denied any claim on his part to the title of Messiah and attributed the whole affair to the gullibility of the Jews. Nevertheless the Grand Vizier did intend to have Shabbethai executed, and desisted only on the advice of a counsellor who warned him that an immediate execution would give rise to a claim on the part of the Jews that the Turks were afraid of the Jewish Messiah and therefore had had him put to death. The counsellor is quoted as saying that if the Jews persisted in regarding Shabbethai Şevi as their Messiah the Government could exploit their belief financially—and could put him to death anyway whenever it was deemed advisable ¹⁴.

Our informant then describes Shabbethai Şevi's imprisonment, first in Constantinople and then near the Dardanelles. The French ambassador M. La Haye ¹⁵ and some French gentlemen visited Shabbethai, and he is said to have repeated to them the version he told the Grand Vizier. On the other hand he maintained his previous attitude in his contacts with Jews who came to see him, and spoke of great things to come, particularly in 1670. The prison near the Dardanelles soon became a centre of pilgrimages and a source of income both to Shabbethai's gaolers and to himself. There follows a description of the riches which Shabbethai accumulated from his admirers. According to our reporter the visits decreased when some pilgrims were put in prison by a Turkish official, who extorted large sums from them. At the same time an epidemic of popular visions broke out among the Jews

¹³ This would seem to have been the author of the *Relation* (cf. p. 19).

¹⁴ The latter part of the explanation links up in a way with the version given by Sasportas about the Cadi of Constantinople having extorted large fines from the Jews on account of the disturbances there even before the interview with the Vizier. *Şişath Novel Şevi*, ed. I. TISHBI, Jerusalem 1945, p. 75. Cf. SCHOLEM, *op. cit.*, p. 367 f.

¹⁵ His career in Turkey is described by P. RYCAUT, *The History of the Turkish Empire*, London 1680, p. 107 ff. See also *Relation*, p. 30; SCHOLEM, *op. cit.*, p. 571.

of Constantinople. Some seven or eight hundred Jews of Balata (a northern quarter of Constantinople) are reported to have had prophetic visions. The heads of the Jewish Community, fearing reprisals on the part of the Turks, soon put an end to this outbreak of mass hysteria ¹⁶.

Then follows the account of Shabbethai's interview with the Sultan and his conversion to Mohammedanism. It took place on 17th September, and is described in identical terms in the *Relation* of the other member of the Jesuit mission ¹⁷. Both attribute to Shabbethai and to his interrogators the same words, and relate the tale of his declaration of faith in the Messianic nature of Jesus Christ—based on the assumption that it was demanded by the Turks as a prerequisite of Jewish converts to Mohammedanism—as well as the theological *excursus* on it. They both have the same story about Shabbethai's attack on the Jews and ridicule of their misguided belief in him, the conversion of his wife, the fortune he was supposed to have amassed, the biscuits he is said to have concealed on his body, etc.

There is a great similarity between the two versions, but they were not written by the same person. Both were members of the same Jesuit mission, and no doubt knew each other well and discussed the matter between themselves. Their attitude to the movement and to the Jews is permeated throughout with the same aversion. The author of the *Relation* is apparently the man who had the encounter with the Jew on the boat mentioned by the author of our report ¹⁸. The French slave was an acquaintance of the author of the *Relation*, but is not described as such by the author of our report ¹⁹. On the other hand they both knew the Christian who quoted the Moslem scholar on his attitude to Christianity ²⁰. The author of the *Relation* mentions previous letters of his to friends in France and in Italy, while the author of the report speaks only of earlier communications to his correspondent in France ²¹.

¹⁶ For a description of the events at the prison near the Dardanelles see SCHOLEM, *op. cit.*, p. 503 f. The author of the *Relation* (p. 23) states that the mass prophecies at Balata involved women only.

¹⁷ *Relation*, p. 29 f.

¹⁸ Cf. *supra*, note 13.

¹⁹ *Relation*, p. 48.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ The Jesuit mission in Constantinople was dependent on the headquarters in Paris, and the letter was probably sent there.

On comparing these with the *Relazione* of Padre Beccaranda there appear several discrepancies. Beccaranda mentions 120 prophetesses compared with 700 of the *Relation* and 7-800 men and women in our report. Beccaranda refrains from mentioning the name of the Portuguese doctor whom Shabbethai Şevi invested with the crown of his native land; the *Relation* omits it, and our report gives his name as one Morano ²². According to the *Relation* Shabbethai was granted a pension of 1½ *écus* a day; our report mentions the same figure, whereas the *Relazione* has 15 *giulii* ²³. Lastly, the author of our report had been four years in Constantinople at the end of 1666, whereas Beccaranda had arrived there in 1660. The author of our report can therefore not be identified either with Beccaranda or with the author of the *Relation*. Though the possibility of Beccaranda's authorship of the *Relation* cannot be excluded entirely, it seems more likely that all three reports were written by different members of the Jesuit mission in Constantinople ²⁴).

It is felt that the great rarity of these pamphlets justifies the publication of our report *in extenso*, and it is thus presented here.

Pax Christi

M.o R.o in Xp.o Pr.e

Nell'altre mie ho scritto a V. R.a diverse particolarità intorno al falso Messia de' Giudei, secondo che ne correvan le nuove in questa città, e mi son impegnato di parola di dargline una compita relazione. L'ho differita fin a quest'hora, parte per vederne l'esito, parte per haver commodità d'informarmi della verità, la quale non so per qual destino in questo paese, per quanto ho potuto veder nello spatio di 4 anni che vi dimorò, è difficilissimo a ritrovarsi in materie anco di natura loro le più cospicue. Infinite sono le cose che si dicevano e che si dicono tutavia di questo ridicolo eroe della povera sinagoga, parte vere, pa te alterate, parte del tuto false: et infinita sarebbe la pena, et a mio credere affatto inutile di che volesse avozzarle insieme tutte. Da

²² *Relation*, p. 29; *Relazione* (Beccaranda), p. 3.

²³ *Relation*, p. 32; *Relazione*, p. 4. The *giulio* was a silver piece of the Papal States.

²⁴ SCHOLEM, *op. cit.*, p. 837, No. 73, states that the *Relazione* (then only known in its anonymous edition) is an earlier and shorter version of the *Relation*.

me sarà qui succitamente narato quel tanto che ho potuto raccorre di certo da testimonii, che per ogni rispetto meritano fede, intorno le qualità di quest'huomo, principio, progressi e fine della sua predicatione.

Egli nacque in smirne l'anno 1625 primogenito di mardochio sevi, che dalla Morea passò in quella città mercantile tra le prime di Levante, mutando la professione di pizzicagnolo in quella di sensale al servizio della nazione Inglese, in fortuna molto mediocre, e fù detto sabadai. Ha ben sortito della natura un'ingegno non mediocre, et una vivacità di spirito non ordinaria, la quale aiutata dello studio l'ha portato a quel segno di dottrina legale e teologica anco la più recondita che chiamano Caballa, che l'ha fatto ammirar e predicar dagli Ebrei come huomo il più addottrinato e savio di quanti vivono al mondo. Proporzionato allo spirito porta egli il corpo di buon taglio e di bella presenza, la quale accompagnata da un trattar manieroso entrante et fatto compito, lo rende amabile a meraviglia. Dopo un breve giro per la Grecia si trasferì per la prima volta in Costantinopoli del 1658, e vi si trattenne poco men d'un anno senza altro impiego che dimostrar la sua dottrina e zelo della legge, con che si conciliò fama di segnalitissimo Dottore, Profeta e santo. Così veniva acclamato dai fanciulli per le strade e dalli poveri allettati dalla sua liberalità, a segno tale che i savii della sinagoga temendo di tirarsi addosso qualche gran disturbo dai Turchi, li quali sentono mal volentieri che vi sia santi e Profeti tra quelli che non sono della loro professione, giudicarono a proposito di sbrigarsene. L'obbligarono per tanto a ritornar a smirne, e l'istesso fece quella sinagoga ad esempio di questa, dopo che vide che ancor ivi conciliatasi l'aura popolare godeva gli medesimi applausi. Si che per lassar i suoi in riposo e sicurtà se n'andò in Cairo, e dopo due anni con una buona limosina che ivi raccolse per i poveri della Palestina portossi in Gerusalemme. In quelle parti dimorò fin a tanto che dichiarato Messia ritornò alla patria, e quindi a Costantinopoli per coronar la sua Missione con un Turbante.

La preconizzazione di questo preteso Messia cominciò qui in Galata da una giovane di 16 in 17 anni come dicono Vergine di grande e molto sublime contemplatione, nella quale diceva ella alli suoi parenti che Dio le mostrava cose di gran stupore, e tra l'altre che l'era comparso un Angelo vestito di luce con una spada scintillante, che l'avvertiva della venuta del tanto aspettato Messia,

e che bisognava apparecchiarsi a riceverlo et andar incontrarlo la dove ben presto doveva farsi vedere su la riva del Giordano per dar alla grand'impresa della Redentione delli Ebrei glorioso e felice principio. Il padre della giovine profetessa comunicò ad alcuni Dottori della legge queste rivelazioni, e col parer di essi concluse che non dovea per modo alcuno negarsi la fede alla voce del cielo, quale com' ad essi pareva s'era sufficientemente dichiarato, ma che al più tosto bisognava trasferirsi a Gerusalemme per ivi attendere l'adempimento dell'Angelica promessa. Corse subito la voce di quest'affare per il paese, ma da molti tra i quali era io non s'egliediede credito, sin a tanto che non si videro Ebrei in qualche numero vender le loro case et andar in Palestina: pensando con più probabilità che verità questa esser una invention di qualchuno, che volesse metter in giuoco e ballo gli Ebrei. Non so se venissero dalla medesima officina due altre notabili visioni, le quali si spaciavano dagli Ebrei con una incredibil sfacciataggione. Dicevano per cosa certissima come veduta ancor dai Greci, che un Angelo diede con la sua spada un fiero colpo al sole, mentre un sabato splendeva più luminoso nel suo meriggio, e con questo lo rese oscuro com' un carbone. Di nuovo lo toccò e della sua spada gli trasfuse nuovi e più vagli splendori. In oltre che s'erano vedute tre stelle combattere sopra il gran seraio del Re Turco, e che dopo d'esser state precipitate al fondo del mare due, la terza vittoriosa con lume radopiato si portò a triomfar in cielo. Queste due segnate visioni aggiunte a quella chiarissima rivelatione della giovine animò tutti gli Ebrei a sperar bene, perche nel sole rallumato riconoscevano lo splendore della loro Monarchia, e nella stella vincitrice la loro religione triomfante della Christiana e Turchesca: e determinò molti a correr in digligenza verso le fortunate rive del Giordano. La fama di queste meraviglie portata e sparsa nella Giudea necessitò molti a creder l'arrivo del Messia già presente et incognito in qualche luogo circonvicino e li più prudenti obligò a consultarvi sopra. Viveva in Gaza, famosa città di Palestina, in stima di santo e Profeta niente inferiore a gli antichi, un certo Rabbino per nome Natan Beniamino di nazione Alemanno. Un così gran concetto e veneratione tra li suoi s'ha egli acquistato giovine di 24 anni con professar una vita austerissima e totalmente applicata alla contemplatione delle divine lettere e con riprendere con una somma libertà et autorità li viti delli suoi, ma sopra tutto con manifestar a più persone li loro peccati occulti. Questo pareva

ad essi una autentica patente del cielo, onde stimavano illuminato il loro Profeta a penetrar le cose più occulte, non avvertendo che n'ha diverse maniere di venir in cognitione di somiglianti secreti senza un minimo raggio di luce divina: e che facilmente ancora poteva ella esser apparente e finta da quelli, che con prendersi queste sorte d'impunità s'accordassero con esso lui per non provar contro di se la punta delle sue troppo penetranti inventive. Comunque ciò sia, è certo che egli era stimato com'un' Angelo di Dio a dispetto della sua presenza, che pare anzi d'un Demonio così è squallido, scarmo, losco, diforme e scontrafatto nel viso et in tutta la persona: e come Angelo di consiglio fù eletto per terminare coll'oracolo suo tutti i dubbii che occorreano nelle consulte d'un sì importante affare: stimandosi che in tutte le sinagoghe non vi fosse alcun'altro in proposito. Rispose egli ch'era verissimo quel tanto che la giovine di Galata havea publicato del Messia, che era Iddio quello che per la di lei bocca parlato haveva e che egli ancora haveva ricevuto dal cielo ordine espresso di esser suo Precursore, e di farlo conoscer al mondo, e che non mancherebbe quanto prima di mostrarglielo. Voi vedrete (disse in un entusiasmo) voi vedrete venir qui tra pochi giorni un certo Rabbi Sabadai Sevi, huomo d'incomparabil santità, il quale io non ho mai conosciuto di vista, ma so che egli è da Dio destinato et inviato per esser liberatore del suo popolo. In fati tra pochi giorni arrivò in Gaza Sabadai e fù riconosciuto et accolto da Natan con ossequii proporzionati al titolo di Messia, del quale già in assenza sua l'haveva honorato preconizandolo per tale in presenza di moltissimi Ebrei. Non accettò questo sì Augusto titolo Sabadai alla prima, chiamando sene indegno come huomo che non haveva quelle doti che sono proprie d'un tal personaggio, ma finalmente obligandolo Natan a creder di sì dopo qualche breve dimora in Gaza si diede a visitar la Giudea e consolar i fratelli. In questo mentre Natan spedì lettere per ogni banda, assicurando gli Ebrei che il promesso da Dio era arrivato e ch'era Sabadai Sevi con esortargli insieme a radunarsi quanto prima vicino a lui per farli degna corte e per servirlo nell'esecutione dell'ufficio per il quale Dio l'havea mandato. Quelli che ricevevano lettere da Natan accompagnate da quelle delli altri hebrei che gli erano attorno, stimavano che hormai non vi fosse più luogo a dubitare, ma che bisognava in effetto disporsi a goder la Divina gratia per mezzo di quest'huomo tanti secoli avanti prenunciato, desiderato

e sospirato. Questi di Costantinopoli spedironò da parte loro Deputati a smirne, dov'egli s'era trasferito, per offerirgli tuta la loro assistenza e servitù nella maniera che egli si fosse degnato di comandargli. Ma sopra tuti vollero segnalarsi nella di lui divotione quelli di smirne come che havevano havuto l'honore che nascesse tra loro e tra loro pur cominciassero ad esercitar pubblicamente la sua carica, trattandolo con dimostrazioni d'una divotissima osservanza e scrivendo per ogni parte meravigliosi encomii della sua perssona. Non so se scrivessero anco dei miracoli, che dalli Ebrei si celebravano qui ad alta voce come pubblici e certissimi: ma la verità certissima è che di questi non s'è vista in lui ne pur una minima apparenza, quale si suol veder in alcuni maghi e fattucchiari. Con tuto ciò le favole contate con tanta asseverazione d'un Turcho d'avanti il Cadi di smirne acciecatò per l'avania suscitata contro un Ebreo, e dopo per il suo pentimento illuminato di caminar sopra il mare a piedi sciutti e d'un morto risuscitato et altre somiglianti facevano l'effetto di veri miracoli nutrando la divotione nel popolo verso il loro già creduto Messia. Nondimeno v'haveva tanto in smirne quanto qui delli Ebrei che non credevano altro se non che costui era un gran furbo. Ma pure il torrente dei fedeli era sì grosso e sì forte che questi puochi erano spacciati per invidiosi, increduli, scomunicati et indegni della gratia dell'aspettata Redentione: e conosco uno in particolare a cui è ben costato l'haver dichiarati troppo liberamente sentimenti contrarii. L'attestatione di Natan Benjamin sola dissipava tuti li dubbii e scioglieva tutte le difficoltà che si tiravano dalle antiche profetie della sacra scrittura. Valeva oltre di ciò l'interpretatione che davano al suo nome, quasi che questo fosse il carattere del suo Augustissimo impiego: poiche sabathai sevi vuol dire Angelo Protettore del sabato: e di più oltre tante altre sue ammirabili doti e prerogative la sua eminente santità magnifestissima nelli continui digiuni di tuta la settimana dal sabato in poi, nella carità verso li poveri, nell'assiduità dell'oratione, nella sapienza impareggiabile, e soprattutto in una meravigliosa continenza. Per prova di questa s'adduceva l'attestatione delle due prime sue mogli, le quali per spatio di più anni la prima di 3 la seconda di due bisogna creder che egli non habbia mai toccato. S'era ben accostato alla terza nata in allemagna per nome Sara, la quale haveva corso il mondo per trovar uno tra tanti mariti, che prendeva per ogni parte, che fosse il Messia, poiche li suoi parenti havevano havuto

rivelatione ch'ella doveva haver l'honore d'esser moglie del Messia. Questa meretrice haveva egli preso all'ultimo si diceva per qualche gran misterio come havea fatto qualcheduno delli antichi profetti per obbedir alle divine ordinationi. Tutto questo congiunto con li miracoli che ogn'uno diceva d'haver intesi da perssone degne di fede, e nessuno d'haver veduti, stimavano che dovesse torre ogni dubitatione intorno alla sua perssone, e che con la debita divotione s'havesse ad attender per mezo suo l'adempimento delle Divine promesse. Conferiva non poco per confortar gl'animi dei fedeli la nuova che facevano correre, che dal più remoto Levante veniva un'esercito di molte centinaia di migliaia d'huomini, che non si sapeva di che legge e lingua fossero, che nondimeno havevano in venaratione il sabato e riconoscevano un solo Dio, et alcuni Ebrei di conto vollero ch'io li mostrassi nella mapa gli paesi ch'erano di là dalla Persia a Levante per veder di che paese potevano venir queste nuove militie, quali non dubitava venir mossa da Dio per assistere al Re Messia. Arrivò ancora in questo momento da Natan Beniamino una nuova fermissima attestatione insieme con le patenti dalla parte di Dio al medesimo sabathai, nelle quali era dichiarato autenticamente Messia con ordine di dar principio all'eccelso uffitio della sua Missione. Con questo si confirmarono quei che già erano del partito, e si guadagnavano molti che prima titubavano: al istesso sabathai cominciò a deporre la modesta dissimulatione, con la quale fin all'hora s'era professato indegno di sì eccelsa dignità et ad esercitar tra gli Ebrei la podestà d'un monarca il più adorato che comparisse mai al mondo, inviando per ogni parte diversi ordini alli suoi fedeli Israeliti.

La sua prima ordinatione fù, che in cambio del digiuno, che con amarissimi pianti e sospiri facevano per la funestissima ruina del Tempio e Città santa di Gierusalemme dovessero far festivi e giuochi con cantici di triomfo e d'allegrezza publica, essendo finalmente venuto colui che dovea non solo rimetter il Tempio nel suo antico splendore, ma di più metter il popolo Ebreo sopra la testa di tutte le nationi della Terra. Oltre a ciò a questi di Levante ordinò, che per segno della prossima libertà lassassero crescer i capegli pendenti lungo la faccia d'avanti l'un e l'altra orecchia. Raccomandò sopra tutto, che s'insistesse con maggior frequenza e divotione nel culto Divino, cantando salmi e ringraziando la Divina Maestà, che havea per una volta esaudite tante lagrime del suo diletto popolo. Il tuto fù puntualmente eseguito,

et era cosa da stupire d'intender per tutti li vicinati di Galata e Constantinopoli salmigiari gli Ebrei giorni e notti intiere: e gli stessi poverelli sforzarsi con spender in bancheti e festivi quel poco di denaro che havevano: e di più l'insolenza et alterezza con che alcuni trattavano guardandosi già sotto i piedi e li Christiani e li Turchi senza curarsi più che tanto del trafico e delli negotii mercantili. Accrebbe non poco l'animo ai suoi fedeli Sabathai con la resolutione che prese di venir in Constantinopoli a trovar il Re Turco, per conformarsi in ciò con Mosè, che per la liberatione del popolo di Dio andò a trovare Faraone Re del Egitto nella sua Reggia. Egli venne a li 6 di Feb.o dopo d'esser stato parecchi giorni per viaggio a caggione di cattivi tempi: e gli Ebrei in gran numero con una gran flotta di Caichi gli andarono in contro celebrando con ciò quel sabbato solenistissimo tra tutti i passati con speranza di veder miracoli stupendi con quali autorizasse la sua Missione nel suprimo arrivo a questa corte imperiale. S'immaginavano alcuni che farebbe scender fuoco del Cielo per incenerir qualche parte della città: alcuni che con un terremoto farebbe cader a terra le muraglie: e che il Re spaventato da questi o altri somiglianti prodigii verrebbe agettarsi ai suoi piedi et offerirli il suo seraglio e il suo Imperio. Tutti ebbri d'allegrezza facevano risuonar le case e le strade di festose voci di giubilo, benedicendo Iddio e'l Messia che pur è venuto. Con insolita fierrezza minacciavano grandi calamità e disastri ai Christiani se non s'univano quanto prima con essi ad honorar con debite accoglienze e con divota sommissione questo già nella loro fantasia divino Monarca dell'universo, et a ricevere la Religione che portava. Molto diversamente l'accosero i Turchi. La Corte havea dato ordine che l'attendessero allo sbarco alquanti sbirri ch'essi chiamano Chiaussi, e lo portassero a dirittura in prigione: e questi ciò eseguirono con ordinaria loro diligenza e cortesia, salutando il povero Sabathai nel primo ricevimento, e poi per la strada con buone pichiate de' loro bastoni, con pugni e continue vilanie. Per non sentir quegli improprietà che li facevano inhorridire più che per sottrarsi dalle bastonade che giuocavano d'ogni intorno, gli Ebrei che erano venuti per far corte al loro Messia ebbero per bene di raccomandarsi alla fuga, e gli altri tutti furono obligati a tenersi per tre giorni continui serrati nelle case per non haver a sentir per tutte le strade le risate solennissime con le quali a gran grida erano burlati da tutte le nationi, e particolarmente quel Ghuldimi che

vuol dire è egli venuto, che durò poi per molti giorni, finche con buona somma di danari ottennero un commandamento che proibisse e castigasse quest' intollerabili insulto. In questi tre giorni si diedero in tutto all'oratione per implorare l'assistenza dell'Altissimo al loro messia, sicuri che dopo si sarebbero veduti prodigii niente inferiori a quelli che fece Mose in Egitto. Uno dei Padri della nostra Compagnia s'incontrò quell'istesso dì nel Caico con un Ebreo, e senti prima le minacce che li faceva alli Christiani, alcuni de' quali passavano nel medesimo Caico, se non cangiavano le derisioni di quel Divino personaggio in ossequii poi un avvertimento da buon amico che diede in particolare a lui: si guardasse bene perche infalibilmente dopo tre giorni si sarebbero vedute stupende meraviglie e mal per gl'infedeli, massime Christiani se per tempo non si ravvedevano. Il Padre per corrispondere al buon termine d'amicizia non mancò d'avvertir l'Ebreo che almeno dopo i tre giorni quando si fosse chiarito della vanità delle sue minacce e della credenza sopra la quale erano fondate, venisse a godere la gratia del S. Battesimo, rinunciando alla sinagoga et ad ogni altro suo Messia venuto o venturo con riconoscer Giesù Christo unico salvator del Mondo, vero Messia e Figlio d'Iddio. Lo promise l'Ebreo, ma non l'attese, mostrando d'esser un' di quelli sopra i quali è caduta la maledittione predetta dal Proffetta Davide: siano scancellati dal Libro de' viventi, ne siano ascritti con i giusti. Finiti i tre giorni sortirono gl'Ebrei con grand animo aspettando con grande e meravigliosa sicurezza di veder che il loro Profetta haverebbe dato principio alla sua e loro liberatione con prodigii segnalitissimi e con miracoli del tutto Divini. Ma essendo per tutte le strade incontrati con scherni et insulti, e con la persecutione di quel Gheldimi, costretti di rittirarsi di novo, pensavano che la loro libertà era differita ancor per qualche tempo. In tanto essendo presentato il povero sabathai davanti il Primo Visir in un pieno Divano, et essendo interrogato intorno al suo impiego, si trovò più alle strette che quando stava in prigione. Il desiderio di conservar la vitta e di goder ancor per qualche tempo la sua bona fortuna gli fece risponder ch'egli era un povero Ebreo, che sopra gli altri non haveva ne pretendeva altro vantaggio che di qualche maggior cognitione che Dio gli havea dato della Legge e di zelo che gl'Ebrei la osservassero secondo la loro professione, et era tanto lontano del persuadersi d'esser il Messia aspettato dagli Ebrei che forse più di nessuno altro si stupiva della pazzia di molti, che a suo

dispetto li volevano far credere d'esserlo, e che a posta perciò era venuto in Constantinopoli temendo d'esser imbarazzato dalla temerità di gente ignorante, e dall'invidia dei maligni e suoi nemici in maggior disturbi: e se non bastava quel che havea detto in particolare che all'ora in publico rinunciava ad ogni titolo di Re di Messia, di liberator e salvator delli Ebrei per poter condurre in pace e riposo il resto de suoi giorni. Questa seca dichiarazione sodisfece intieramente al Divano, non però al Visiro, il quale sapendo distintamente quel che s'era passato, e la strada che s'andava aprendo ai tumulti e sollevationi con tanto concorso delli Ebrei d'ogni paese, era risoluto di farlo morire. Se n'astenne con tutto ciò attendendosi al parere d'uno di quei Consiglieri che disse: non esser a proposito levargli la vita così tosto per il falso romore che havrebbero sparsi gli Ebrei che quest'huomo faceva gran miracoli et ora per farne maggiori e che i Turchi per paura che oscurasse il loro Profetta l'hanno fato morire. Lassamolo, disse, per qualche tempo ben guardato in prigione a finche il mondo si chiarisca di quanto egli possa: se gli Ebrei persistono nella sua divotione se ne potranno cavar grosse somme di dennari e finalmente ogni volta che si vorrà se gli potrà dar la morte. Fù per tanto rimesso in prigione dove si vedeva un' incredibile concorso dagli Ebrei, e dei Christiani ancora per vederlo. V'andorono tra gli altri alcuni gentilhuomini Francesi venuti in compagnia dell'Ambassador di sua Maestà Christianissima Mons.re dell'Haye. A questi diceva quell'istesso che havea detto in publico al Visiro. Ma agli Ebrei ch'erano rimasti attoniti del suo modo che vedrebbero gran cose, particolarmente nel 1670. A cagion di questo concorso si stimò più a proposito di mandarlo ad uno dei Castelli che chiamano Dardaneli che di guardarlo nelle prigioni di questa città. Corse subito voce che questa mutatione di prigione non era altro che un farlo morire senza strepito et a fogare tutte le speranze delli Ebrei, e con esse tutti i tumulti in quel Canale di Helesponto. Gli Ebrei che temevano fosse ciò vero si diedero quasi ad una estrema disperatione, ma quando intesero ch'il loro Messia era ancor vivo e che non era stato condannato se non alla prigione ripresero maggiormente l'animo, parendo loro una spetie di miracolo l'haver scampata la vitta in una sì horibil tempesta, nella quale tutt'il mondo lo teneva perduto. Con la speranza si renvigorì e crebbe anco la divotione, la quale portò moltissimi a veder l'incatenato loro Liberatore: in tal modo che ogni giorno si

vedeva una processione dei Caichi che andavano e tornavano dai Dardanelli accorendo ogni dì da paesi lontani nuovi adoratori e seguaci di questo Messia, di Polonia in particolare ne vennero migliaia, e perchè gli Turchi non prendessero maggior ombra di tanta folla d'Ebrei davano ad intendere che per non so qual rumore accaduto in quel Regno n'erano stati discacciati. Con questa occasione il Castellaro dei Dardanelli guadagnò gran somma di danari, vendendo ben caro a questi divoti pellegrini l'accesso al loro amato sostegno, e la permissione di veder l'unico appoggio delle loro speranze. Ma Sabathai ha fatto tesori, lassandosi all'ultimo persuadere ad accettare doni che tanti milla Ebrei o gl'inviavano da lontano o gli portavano in presente, pregandolo d'aggradire quella piccola testimonianza della loro affetione e della sicurezza e fede che havevano di vederlo quanto prima in istato da poter ben ricompensare la loro divota offerta. Vi sono stati di quelli che l'hanno regalato delle più belle gioie che si possano vedere, delle quali mi scrive un amico della Corte d'Adrianopoli l'haver veduto un Catalogo ben lungo con suo somme stupore sì per la quantità come per la qualità delle gioie. Due ricconi d'Olanda l'assicuravano nelle lettere scritegli da Venetia, dove s'erano trasferiti di già per avvicinarsigli, che havevano venduti tutti i loro stabili, desiderando di venir a ricever la sua benedditione e di metter a suoi piedi alquanti milioni a finche ne disponesse a suo piacere, contenti solo della sua gratia e di quei commandi che gli fosse piaciuto dar loro. Ne vi sono mancate donne anco le più povere che si sono private di dar quanto haveano braccialetti orecchini et altro per haver l'honore di donar qualche cosetta a colui dal quale attendevano la buona fortuna di Regina sicure di montar con un salto della mischinità estrema alli più vantaggiosi posti dell'Imperio. Il Bustangi Bassa, ch'è uno de principali ministri di questo Imperio e vuol dire Capo Giardiniero, havendo incontrato un giorno nell'uscire del porto sette gran Caichi pieni di questi divoti pellegrini, ch'andavano alla divotione dei Dardanelli se gli fece venir accanto per fargli ben bastonare e di più fargli ben pagar la pena di battergli. Essi appellarono al Caimacano ch'è il Governatore della città ma però non servi ad altro che a raddoppiar le bastonate et a passar in prigione donde tra alquanti giorni uscirono ma con haver prima placata la colera di questo ministro con grandi e ricchi presenti e con buone mancie a gli altri uffitiali. Cessò la maraviglia di queste processioni

che per paura di somiglianti incontri s'andavano diminuendo, con iscoprirsene un'altra maggiore. Questa fù un gran numero di sette a otto cento tra huomini e donne che si scoprirono particolarmente nell'angolo setentrionale della città detto Balata invasare da spirito Profetico. Non posso creder che simulassero penso più tosto che la malinconia agitata da si inaspettati accidenti gli haveva distemperato il cervello si che facevano d'aspiritate saltando e dimenandosi con predir nella furia maggior del loro entusiasmo varie particolarità della vicina liberatione dell'Ebraismo e d'un imperio non mai più veduto al mondo. Non durò però che due o tre settimane questa pazzia perche i savii delle sinagoghe temendo di tirarsi adosso qualche gran malano per questa via a tutta la natione vi diedero ben proprio et opportuno rimedio con metter in cattene e sott'al bastone quelli che mostravano d'haver un si bell' talento di profetare. Si fomentava niente dimeno la divotione del popolo verso il Messia preteso parte con miracoli che si contavano a piena bocca parte con gli oracoli di sapienza divina che rifferivano quelli che l'havevano inteso risponder alle difficoltà propostegli. Ci hanno fato rider a savità li raconti de suoi prodigii, dicendo con tuta la fermeza possibile ch'egli usciva tutte le noti della prigione per andar a prender la frescura su le rive dell'Ellesponto, che caminava sopra il mare a piede asciuto per passar la sera d'Europa in Asia, e ritornar di buon mattino per rimettersi nelle sue gloriose catene, che haveva una corte invisibile di più legioni delli Angeli, con li quali si trateneva in discorsi celesti e nel ordinare la futura Monarchia e le leggi che dovea stabilir al mondo: che passava più e più giornate senz'alcun cibo e d'ordinario tutta la settimana senz'alcuna pena, anzi parendo sempre più vigoroso et allegro: che haveva tesori inesausti per arricchire un mondo intiero, poi che l'haveano veduto tirar da borselli vuoti manciate piene d'orro e d'argento per sovenir alle necessità di quei poveri che ricoverano a lui, e degli altri che sapeva suoi divoti. Non ostante questi rumori li più accorti, che sapevano ben esser del tutto falso lo pregavano con grand'istanza che desse hormai qualche principio a sollevar di tante pene i suoi cari fratelli, per la cui liberatione era stato inviato da Dio trovandosi essi al presente più che mai trapazzati et oltraggiati con gran discapito ancora della sua riputatione, e che per tal effetto operasse qualche miracolo segnalato, havendone ricevuta da Dio pienissima potestà come lor havea più volte affermato, perche altrimenti temevano

che la pazienza de' suoi fedeli essendo ridotta all'estremità con una estrema miseria non si perdesse in un tratto con tutt' il merito di tanta divotione che fin al presente havevano dimostrato: che in effetto era un gran scandalo et una tentatione molto possente il veder colui ch'era venuto a disegno di sollevar l'afflita sinagoga dalla schiavitudine sì longa e sì miserabile posto in un, stato nel quale pareva bisognoso dall'aiuto altrui, anzi che sufficiente per aiutar altrui: finalmente che faceva torto a se stesso et alla causa di Dio se quanto prima con qualche esemplare castigo non respri-meva l'insolenza hormai intollerabile de' suoi nemici. A tutte queste doglianze rispondeva egli con animo franco e fronte serena che quello era l'ordinario stile di Dio di provare con maggiori tentazioni la fedeltà e la costanza di coloro ai quali disegnava di far giu(sti)zie maggiori, il che provava egli con una longa induzione tolta dalle scritture: che la Corona e la gloria caminano pari con la forza d'animo e con l'humile sofferenza quanto più havessero sofferto tanto sarebbe stata più gloriosa ricompensa e servirebbe loro per raddoppiar la gioia il vedersi in un subito portati dall'estremo delle sciagure ad una incomparabile felicità: che dovevano imitar la sofferenza dei travagli de' quelli eroi dell'antica sinagoga e considerar ancora con quanto rispetto adorava egli stesso le disposizioni della divina provvidenza, supportando tanti affronti e strapazi che loro stessi vedevano quanto indegni fossero della persona sapendo bene che tutto quello serviva per sua maggior gloria e per mostrar più evidentemente a gl'increduli l'onnipotente braccio dell'altrissimo che si pregia di rimetter in piede le cose più abbattute e disperate affatto e di cavar dalla prigione un Giuseppe per meterlo sul trono e farlo acclamar per salvatore: et in questo mostrarsi veri Israeliti e legittimi figliuoli d'Abramo padre dei credenti: continuassero ad haver buon cuore e domandar a Dio la gratia della santa pazienza, che gli assicurava senz'alcun fallo che la loro liberatione era vicina e tra poco bene direbbono la memoria di tanti oltraggi sofferti, restavano loro da far ancora quatro o cinque passi per compir la carriera e non era dovere di perder la Corona dietro alla quale corevano tanto tempo in qua con tanta fatica all'hor appunto quando la toccavano di già con le mani e ch'erano in punto di vedersele su la fronte; ad alcuni di maggior confidenza comunicava ancora qualche secreto intorno alla disposizione della prossima sua monarchia et asseg-nava di già li principati e li Regni. Questa sorte di liberalità havea

già cominciato egli ad esercitare fin da smirne, dove ad un famoso medico detto Dottor Morano nativo di Portogallo, e che ha passato gran parte della vita sua in Bordeos vivendo da buon Catolico come fanno al presente alcuni suoi parenti, assegnò il Regno di Portogallo per la gran stima che faceva della sua capacità e per il merito della sua divotione, sapendo bene quanto affettuosamente predicasse le sue lodi e quanto fruttuosamente per esser in riputatione di huomo da bene e di gran sapere.

Sul fin d'Agosto il Re Turco essendo stato informato dal suo Mufti et altri Capi della Legge dello scandalo che apportava al Mahometismo questa riputatione e fama tutavia crescente di quest'huomo che gli Ebrei tenevano per loro vero Messia, con corendo da ogni parte per assisterlo, deliberò per alcuni giorni sopra l'affare e finalmente inviò un messo ai Dardanelli con ordine che gli fosse condotto avanti Sabathai. Fù egli menato in Adrinopoli e presentato al Re gli 17 di settembre, giorno che sarà memorabile nelli Fasti Ebrei come quello che con la sua luce gli scuopri l'orribil inganno nel quale stavano e reccò il termine delle loro gloriosissime speranze. Interrogato chi fosse e perche si spacciasse per Messia delli Ebrei. Rispose nel istesso tenore, che havea fatto in Constantinopoli al Visir: che sapeva bene d'esser un povero huomo e che non poteva aspirar più alto di quello che Dio l'haveva fatto, che tutte quelle non erano altro che imposture de suoi nemici che per quella via havevano dissegnato di perderlo. Non basta questo li fece dire il Re ma per levar di scandalo tanti fedeli e per disingannar tutt'il mondo bisogna che in questo momento stesso per le mani d'uno di costoro che ti stanno ai fianchi tu perda la testa, o che rinuntii alla tua Legge per farti musulmano. Pregò per un poco di tempo a fine di deliberare sopra un punto si importante: ma essendogli negata ogni proroga bisognò che si dichiarasse quivi in quell'hora istessa. Egli dopo qualche breve riflessione a quel che temeva a quel che già si trovava alle mani et a quel di più che poteva sperare disse ch'era Turco e che voleva vivere e morir Turco. Questo va bene soggiunse il Vanli famoso Predicatore del Re, ma inoltre fa bisogno che tu distintamente confessi che Giesù Christo figlio di Maria Vergine è Profeta di Dio e vero Messia, il che Sabathai fece copiosamente con dire: Tuto ciò è vero et io lo confesso qui ad alta voce e sono pronto ad publicar per tutt' il mondo che Giesù Christo è il Messia promesso a gli Ebrei e ch'essi sono ignoranti, matti, perfidi, ostinati nell'erore e malitia

loro se sperano che n'abbia a venir alcun altro. La singular gentileza con che spiegò egli questi suoi concetti diede molto nell'humore al Re et a tutti i Principali della Corte che assistevano spettatori di sì bella scena dove quell'operator dei miracoli, quel savio senza pare, quel salvatore delli Ebrei, si veder un'infame rinegato. Gli fruttò subito la buona gratia del Principe che s'era guadagnato con quella vivacità di spirito e coll'abiurar et anatematizzare sì gratiosamente l'ebraica perfidia. Imperoche oltre l'honorato nome di Agis Mehemet Aga che il Re gl'impose comunicandogli il suo nome e vuol dire Caro Signore Mehemet, quasi da tutti gli astanti hebbe ricchi presenti et quel che è più dal medesimo Re un'ufficio nel seraio con esser fatto uno dei Capigi Bassi, diremo principali portinari o Usceri, con tratenimento d'un scudo e mezzo al dì. V.R. mi permetta di far qui una breve riflessione sopra l'espressa professione fatta da sabathai che Giesù Christo N.S. è il vero Messia per disinganno d'una certa opinione che hanno alcuni nella Christianità, che li Turchi nel ricevere ala loro setta gli Ebrei vogliono che si facciano prima Christiani a fine di non passar da una estremità all'altra senza passar per mezzo et intrar con pie loddì nel santuario, stimando che non v'ha nazione sì sporca e più abominevole che gli Ebrei, come altresì più sacrosanta che la loro. Falsissima opinione, quale non so come si sia propagata nella Christianità, poiche quando i Turchi ricevono al mahometismo gli Ebrei ne gli battezano ne da essi esigono la Confessione della Divinità di Christo, che poi è l'essenza del Christianesimo, ma solo della sua suprema dignità di Messia, come ho detto che hanno fatto far a Sabathai. Perche si come li Turchi vogliono male ai Christiani che adorano per Dio Giesù Christo così abboriscono e detastano d'avantaggio gli Ebrei che non lo credono ne pure Messia o Profeta. E se bene dai titoli che nell'Alcorano vengono dati a Giesù Christo si raccoglie non solo quel che raccolgono i più savii tra gli mahometani che la fede dei Christiani è miglior che la loro e che i Christiani devono esser con maggior speranza dell'eterna salute che verun'altro, come quelli che professano servitù et il seguito d'un Profeta che i Turchi stessi sono obbligati a creder il più caro e più privilegiato che Dio habbia, e quel che è più, vivo, dove tanto Muamed Profeta loro quanto mose profeta delli Ebrei sono morti; ma inoltre ch'egli sia Dio; con tutto ciò i Turchi non vogliono intender questa conseguenza, ne pur operar conseguentemente a quel che conoscono e con-

fessano del pregio e della sicurezza della fede Christiana e del singolar merito di Christo, quatanche l'habbiano communemente in gran veneratione e castigghino più severamente chi lo bestemiasse che non si fa in qualche parte della Christianità. Un vecchio Dottor dei Turchi che è qui al presente in stima d'huomo più savio che habbia quest' Impero, ad'un Christiano mio conoscente, che per curiosità un dì lo domandò che sentimenti havesse della nostra fede, disse non dubitar punto amico mio della tua legge e non sii mai si sciocco di cangiarla con alcun altra: e quindi dopo d'haver detto varie cose in comendatione di Christo et insieme della legge Turchesca, (a)ggijunse per conclusione queste parole: e noi crediamo e voi che Christo è vivente in Cielo e che ha da giudicar il mondo: a chi dunque è da fidarsi più ad un morto o ad un vivo, e da chi si puo sperar miglior e più larga ricompensa che da quello ch'è destinato da Dio arbitro dell'humana felicità. Così conchiudeva questo Turcho, ma meglio inferì la Divinità di Christo da questo medesimo titolo di Giudice un Christiano schiavo di Nation Francese, a cui forse in parte del premio di quella libertà con che l'havea confessato, Dio fece gratia che fosse da lì a poco liberato dalla schiavitudine. Un Commandante havea ripreso acremente costui per haverlo un giorno inteso ad alta voce invocar Giesù Christo con titoto di figlio di Dio. Rispose egli io lo credo tale e penso che per tale confessar lo deve chiunque ha quel concetto di Christo, che la vostra legge obbliga voi stessi ad haver di lui. Come soggiunse il Turco che vuoi tu dire, spiegati meglio. All'ora il Christiano: non è egli vero disse che Giesù Christo deve giudicar il mondo. Noi lo confessiamo rispose il Turco. Quindi il Christiano inferì, dunque bisogna che lo confessiate ancora Dio. La ragion è perche non v'è altri che habbia l'autorità et il diritto di giudicar il mondo se non il Creator del mondo; dunque havendo Christo tal podestà e diritto bisogna che egli sia Creator del mondo e Dio. Restò confuso colui a questo argomento d'un povero schiavo che non haveva studiato ne Teologia ne Filosofia e non sapendo che dir altro si rivolse all'ingiurie con dire: mira questo cane, questo infedele come parla e come sa ben difender la sua legge. Va via che tu ne sai più che non comporta la tua conditione. Molto più convincente argomento havrebbe egli potuto tirare dal titolo di Verbo e spirito di Dio che vien atribuito a Christo nell'Alcorano se fosse più addottrinato. Tanto basti haver detto intorno a quel che sono obligati gl'Ebrei a professar distintamente di Christo

facendosi Turchi secondo la credenza di questi. Vediamo il resto della comedia di Agis Mehemet Aga, alias sabathai sevi creduto Messia dalli Ebrei, che forse è il più bello. Mentre che fatta la publica professione del Mahometismo lo spogliavano delli habiti suoi ordinarii per vestirlo alla Turchesca, nelle saccocchie che havea di sotto assai capaci gli trovarono tre libre di biscotto che egli teneva per ogni bisogno d'assedio, quando il suo confidente servitore non havesse potuto a cagion della folla secretamente portargli come faceva da mangiare e spacciar intanto appresso la sua gente che campava per miracolo senza cibo. Disse poi che teneva forte che gli hebrei irritati dall'affronto che havea fatto a essi et alla loro legge non lo facessero morire: al che gli fece rispondere il Re che di ciò non si pigliasse pensiero alcuno: ma avvertisse ben sì di non trattar mai più con essi perche senz'altro haverebbe lassata la testa alla prima che si sapesse che egli ha un minimo commercio o pratica benche superficialissima con loro. Che ho da far io più con cotesta razza di gente, soggiunse egli. Io di già ho havuto quel tanto che pretendevo haver da essi: non ho che cercar d'avantaggio da quei matti, infami, traditori, e nemici di Dio e di tutti gli huomini da bene. Sono di già vinti anni che io havendo conosciuto la loro falsa fede, la malizia e l'ostinatione nel peccato, ho cercato tutti i modi possibili per rovinargli e far loro perder ogni riputatione et ogni bene. Per questa mi sono preso piacere d'impegnargli in questa follia di credermi per loro Messia, et ho procurato d'impoverirgli quanto ho potuto, gettando loro scrupoli continui nella coscienza sopra la robba mal acquistata con crudelissime usure, per l'opinione che hanno che tutti i beni della Terra sono di ragione loro, e che senz'alcuna lesione della giustizia se ne possono impadronir a dritto o a torto, e di più prometendo loro che quei che sarebbero stati più pronti a distribuir alli poveri i loro beni o a vender a miglior mercato a chiunque si fosse haverebbono ancora nella distribution ch'io devo far di tutti i beni del mondo parte migliore, essendo risoluto di render a tutti mille per uno. Et in questo bisogna che dica la verità sono stato sì felice ch'io stesso alcune volte non potevo tener le risa mentre me gli vedevo avanti con tanta rassegnatione a metter tra le mie mani tutt' i loro beni. M'ha ben servito in ciò il mio ventaglio per coprir la faccia sin che non potesse alcuno accorgersi del mio sorridere. Tra gl'altri due mercanti Ollandesi m'hanno mandata un attestatione autentica qualmente per obedir alli miei

ordini havevano di già impiegati cento milla scudi in maritar gran quantità di povere donzelle et a far altre opere di misericordia. E voi senza gran pena potete vedere com' ho ridotto quasi all'ospedale gli Ebrei di Salonichi che poco prima erano sì ricchi. Per honorar maggiormente questo neofito e per provar altresì la sua conversione Vanli Imam con alcuni altri principali della Corte li volle tener compagnia a tavola dove havea dato ordine ma secretissimo che si portasse tra le altre vivande una non so quale che è agli Ebrei indispensabilmente proibita. Agis Mehemet Aga la addochio subito et accortosi del gergo disse loro: signori non habiate paura ch'io tralasci di gustar questa buona vivanda che voi puo esser havete fatta servir a posta per provar la mia fede. Io v'ho pur detto sono di già 20 anni ch'io sono Musulmano e sappiate ch'io fin d'all'ora per quanto ho potuto ho mangiato di cotesto messo, e da questo a punto voglio cominciar hora a darvi buon esempio di portarvi bene, habbate pur buon appetito come l'ho io, e non mancaremo di far il dovuto honore a questa solennità. Questa franchezza e disinvoltura nel trattare e nel confessare il male che ha procurato di far agli Ebrei odiati in estremo dai Turchi e ben più che non sono dalli Christiani gli ha guadagnata intieramente la gratia dei Turchi, in modo che conversano con lui particolarmente il Vanli con una strettissima famigliarità, pigliando questi un incredibil piacere nell'intender da lui le stravaganze del Talmud, gli errori propositati della sinagoga d'oggi, la stupidità della gente minuta, la malizia e la furbaria dei Rabbini e Hahani e sopra tutto le machine delle quali s'è servito per condurre al suo termine tutto l'intrigo della sua Missione e gli bellissimi e curiosissimi avvenimenti che li sono accorti nel progresso d'un istoria sì ridicola. Non dico altro dello stupore delle grida, delle lagrime, della confusione e sordimento in che si trovarono i divoti Ebrei nell'intender l'abiuratione che havea fatto della loro Legge e le maledittioni che getava sopra di essi Sabathai Sevi creduto con tanta fermezza loro Messia e con speranza che quanto prima dovesse dichiararsi Monarca dell'Universo poi che egli è facil cosa ad imagenarselo. Per le strade di Adrinopoli passarono alcuni giorni che non si vedeva per un Ebreo: ne si sentiva altro per le case che urli da disperati. In Constantinopoli seguirono i medesimi effetti quando n'arrivò la nova: tutto che alcuni non se la potessero persuadere et altri confidassero ancora che ciò fosse un stratagemma per arrivar meglio al suo dissegnato

Imperio. Adesso fanno tutti a chi sa e puo più maledire la furbaria di questo forfante, che li ha resi tanto ridicoli in faccia di tutt' il mondo e dettestare la propria credulità che ha dato sì horribil sacco alle loro borse. Hora fanno i savii bellissime et acutissime riflessioni sopra la maniera della quale si portava questo galant'-huomo onde se non fossero stati matti o incantati potevano ben facilmente accorgersi che egli era un tristo et huomo di mal affare. Hora confrontano le manifeste contradittioni nelle quali più volte gl'hanno colto la sua ignoranza in diversi punti della legge, la sua inconstanza mille decisioni i disegni, le promesse d'un istessa cosa fatta ieri a Rabi Samuele, il giorno seguente a Rabi mardocai. Hora osservano quanto fosse dedito al piacere, riferendo alla sensualità quel tanto dilettersi della Musica, e tratener quasi del continuo nella sua camera cantor e sonator d'ogni sorte di stromenti, che prima era pura divotione et imitazione del Profetta Reale con far intender di più che egli ciò faceva per dar qualche Idea a quelli che secco trattavano di quella eterna Musica e concerto con che gli Angeli nella Celeste Gerusalemme ricriano le orecchie dei Beati. Quella che prima chiamavano Maestà degna d'un Messia hor s'accorgono ch'era un insoportabil fasto troppo lontano dallo spirito delli veri servi di Dio: che apena si degnava di guardar quelli stessi che venivano a metter a suoi piedi il più prezioso del loro havere, e che humilmente lo suplicavano d'agradirlo mentre non pretendevano altro che l'honore d'havergli parlato e d'haver havuto la sua benedittione. Il sorriso del quale in somiglianti occasioni tal'uno s'era accorto all'hora era in estasi e tratenimento son gli Angeli suoi Cortigiani, hora vedono di qual vena sortisse. L'eccesso impertinente di sfaccentissima millantaria con che si vantava d'haver per suoi paggi li due principali Archan-geli della Corte Celeste Michele e Gabrielle, ai soli nomi dei quali tremavano da un riverente horrore soprapresi i più gran santi del Testamento Vecchio passava in quel tempo per autentica prova della sovrhumana Carità di sovrano Luogotenente di Dio. Così gli Ebrei al presente che non è più tempo vanno ponderando gli andamenti et il procedere di sabathai, scoprendo non tanto la di lui vigliaccaria quanto la propria sciocchezza. In tanto Agis mehemet Aga si ride de fatti loro e gode che il giuoco gli sia riuscito sì felicemente, facendo applauso al suo ingegno che ha saputo trovar un inventione così efficace per arricchirsi sui beni della più avara gente del mondo quasi d'un mezzo milione, a quel che dicono alcuni,

tra in oro e gemme che loro ha cavato si destramente di mano. Ha fatto venir Sara sua misteriosa Consorte a goder con esso lui gli frutti della sua industria simulatione: ne essa ha mancato di dimostrar al suo caro marito la sua affettione, faccendosi ancor essa per amor suo Turca, e pigliando nuovo nome di Fatuma Cadun conforme alla nuova professione. E se bene ella è stata piccata un poco trovando ch'il suo marito haveva presa un'altra moglie Turca datagli dalla Regina come per una collana d'oro a fine d'attaccarlo più strettamente al Mahometismo, non dimeno il dispiacere vien assorbito da tanti honori che fatti e dalla gloria di vedersi servita da tante schiave parte compratela dal marito parte donatele dalla Regina. Dalla giovine profetessa di Galata che ha cominciato il primo atto di questa Comedia non si sa dove sia hora, ne che ne sia divenuto: com'anco del gran Profeta e Precursore Natan Beniamin che ha saputo cosi bene promuovere tutto l'intrigo. Non si dubita punto che faranno a gara Agis Mehemet Aga da una parte per remunerare l'un e l'altra per haver ambidue fatta eccellentemente ben la parte loro, e gli Ebrei dall'altra parte per vendicar l'effronto di si estrema confusione, che gli secoli avvenire stenteranno a credere.

Sopra questa memorabile historia so che si faranno et al presente e nei secoli a venire bellissime considerationi. Io per me adoro in questo fatto la Divina providenza, la quale ha fatto veder a tutto il mondo questa gran verità che gli Ebrei sono in questo tempo privi del sacro dono della Profetia e Divina illuminatione della quale in ogni tempo è stata favorita da Dio l'antica sinagoga, e da poi la Santa Chiesa Catolica secondo quella notabile Profetia di Osea intorno alla reprobatione degli Ebrei e subrogatione delle altre nationi nella gratia di S.D.M. dove nel capitolo primo V. 9 dice che quei che non erano prima popolo di Dio saranno chiamati figliuoli di Dio Vivente, e poi nel cap. 3 V. 4 che li figliuoli d'Israele saranno lungo tempo senza il Regno senza il Principato senza il sacrificio senza altare senza sacerdocio e senza la profetia e divina illuminatione, cosi spiegano li settanta, il Targum Caldeo et Aquila quella parola Ebraica Theraphim, et all'ultimo ritorneranno al suo vero Dio e Re della stirpe di Davide vero Messia e salvatore. Imperoche se vi fosse stato alcun altro in stima e concetto di Profeta et huomo di Dio senza dubbio in un affare di si grande importanza l'havrebbero consultato come han' fatto con Natan Beniamin e non sarebbero stati cosi misera-

mente uccellati da un huomo che non haveva ne meno apparenza alcuna della divina assistenza con alcuna sorte de miracoli.

Non mi distendo più lungamente ne in questa ne in altre considerationi per non uscir dai limiti d'un semplice racconto, che havevo promesso a V.R. intorno la persona di Sabathai Sevi creduto Messia da tutte le sinagoghe per quanto si sa dell'Asia e dell'Europa et intorno la sua impresa di liberar li Ebrei terminata in maggior danno et opprobrio loro con la professione che ha finalmente fatto del Mahometismo. Onde per fine ricordo a V.R. quella obligata e divota servitù che le ho io professato sempre e con ogni humiltà mi raccomandando alli suoi santi sacrificii, Constantinopoli 15 December 1666.

Di V.R.

Tel Aviv

S. SIMONSOHN

French 17th — 18th century sources for Anglo-Jewish history

FRENCH archival and printed sources contain a great deal of material relevant to 17th-18th century Anglo-Jewish history. The object of this article is to draw attention to some of such sources.

A large number of Jews from the Sephardic communities of France sailed from Bordeaux to England, most of them bound for London. Some were English Jews returning to their homes or were on their way to other countries for business: others were emigrants in search of new homes. Some applications for passports bear notes by the applicants or by the officials to the effect that the emigrants—newly arrived families from Portugal and Spain, with small children—would never reenter to France. Sometimes Marranos from Portugal or Spain stated openly in such applications that they wished to settle in England. One of these, Davit [David] de Molina, who applied for a passport to London on June 8, 1731, was 95 years old.¹ The Sephardic "Nations" of England and France were constantly in contact and often sited as guarantors for their members. Thus French Sephardim who resided in London obtained certificates from the "Nation" of London.²

Of a special interest are those sources which indicate the rôle of Jews in trade relations between the two countries. The following are but a few examples: between 1730 and 1741 David Lindo, a rich Bordeaux merchant dealing in wine and colonial products was engaged in commercial transactions with amongst other firms the following merchants and bankers of London, most of whom were Jews: Adolphus (1739), Albert (1735-41), Brandon (1736), Bravo (1736), Capados (1736), Cardozo (1739), Da Costa (1736-37), David (1736), Ergas (1731-36), Franco (1734-35), Gomès (1734), Horver (1738-40), Isaac and Moses Lindo (1735-38), Lopes Pinteiro (1736-39), Lopes Suasso (1735-40), Benjamin Mendes da Costa (1733-36), Nuñez (1736-37), Osorio (1737),

¹ Z. Szajkowski, "Jewish Emigration from Bordeaux during the eighteenth and nineteenth Centuries," *Jewish Social Studies*, xviii (1956), pp. 119, 123-24.

² *Copie des Lettres-Patentes de Sa Majesté très chrétienne, confirmatives des privilèges, dont les Juifs Portugais jouissent en France depuis 1550; données à Versailles, au mois de Juin 1776. Enregistrées au Parlement de Bordeaux.* n.p., n.d., 3 pp., fol. Contains the form of a certificate by the "Marguilliers et Anciens de la Nation Juive Portugaise établie à Londres . . ."

Peslan (1737), Rigail (1735), Salvador (1737), Supino (1736-37).³ Gabriel da Silva, one of the most important Bordeaux merchants and a leader of the Sephardic "Nation" had, between 1728 and 1782, commercial relations with the following London firms: Boissier and company (1755-57), Carioa (1753), Antonio da Costa (1734-44), Desmaretz and Banal (1753-59), Marquez (1752-57), Moses and Isaac Mendes (1749), Benjamin Mendès da Costa (1734-58), Morice (1757), Silva junior (1757-59), Summer (1749).⁴ Isaac Nunes Tavarez of Saint-Esprit-lès-Bayonne imported wheat from England and Germany.⁵ Jacob Yesurun Barzilai of London was in 1771 in business with the Sephardim of Saint-Esprit-lès-Bayonne, which is a suburb of Bayonne: Jews were not allowed to live in Bayonne itself.⁶

Of all the printed sources it is the briefs—known in French bibliographies as *factums*—that are the most important. The 16th century saw the expansion of juridical literature in France, mostly on Roman law and on the local *droit coutumier*, unwritten law sanctioned by usage. In the 17th century development of juridical literature included composition in French rather than in Latin, for the use not only of scholars, judges, and lawyers, but also for parties involved in lawsuits and the general public. It was this change that accounts for the rapid growth in the use of *factums*, i.e., briefs prepared by lawyers for both plaintiffs and defendants.⁷ The briefs very often contain not only sound legal arguments, but also descriptions of customs and traditions, personal attacks and insults, the life stories of the parties concerned and other kinds of information. This popular judicial literature was greatly influenced by a mania for litigation which is reflected in a large number of such actions, and also by unscrupulous judges and lawyers.⁸ It was only at a later period (in 1774) that an ordinance restricted the publication of briefs to important and highly contested

³ Departmental archives of Gironde (Bordeaux), 7B1601-03. See also the printed catalogue: *Répertoire numérique du fonds des négociants*. (7 B 1001 à 3154), Bordeaux, 1960. 93 pp.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7B2072-76.

⁵ City archives of Bayonne, FF533.

⁶ *Ibid.*, CC43.

⁷ On the rôle of *factums* see M. DE LA CROIX, art. *Factum*, in the *Encyclopédie méthodique* (jurisprudence).

⁸ Z. SZAJKOWSKI, *The Economic Status of the Jews in Alsace, Metz and Lorraine, 1698-1788*. New York, 1954, pp. 99-100.

lawsuits.⁹ The briefs are accordingly extremely useful as historical sources. The number of *factums* is very large: the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris alone possesses 57,000, 32,000 of which were published before 1789,¹⁰ many of them concerning Jewish parties. However, with but rare exceptions, they have not been used by Jewish historians.

The case of Abraham Payba, alias James Roberts, against Eduard Wortley Montagu before the French courts of law, is already well known. Not less than twelve briefs were published in connection with this case. So is also the case of Francis Francia.¹¹ The following are a few less well-known cases: Pedro Rodrigues Alpalhao, a Marrano of Bordeaux, went back to Portugal where he married Dona Hieronima—Josepha Pestana, of a very rich family. They had seven children. The oldest of them, Carlos, in fear of the Inquisition, left for England in March 1746 and from there went to France. Carlos became the father of two children by his housekeeper, Catherine Alpalhao, and he later requested a part of his father's estate.¹² Isaac Castro-Chacon of Saint-Espirit-lès-Bayonne married Judith Alvarés Corcho in 1764 in England. Her dowry was secured by a marriage contract drawn up according to the laws of England. Chacon went bankrupt and his creditors requested settlement from the debtor's capital mortgaged as the wife's dowry. They lost the case because the French judges recognised the English marriage contract as legal in France.¹³ French Jews often went over to England in order to

⁹ *Declaration du Roi, portant réglemant concernant les Mémoires à consulter* ... 18 mars 1774 ... Paris, 1774, 4 pp. 4°.

¹⁰ *Catalogue des Factums et d'autres documents judiciaires antérieurs à 1790*, Paris, 1890-1936, 10 vol.

¹¹ JOSEPH JACOBS and LUCIEN WOLF, *Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica*, London, 1888, pp. 96-97; Cecil Roth, *Magna Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica*, London, 1937, pp. 248-51.

¹² *Précis du Procès pendant au Parlement, entre Francisco-(Joseph) Dasilva Correa Alpalhao, Juif Portugais, exposant, intimé sur l'appel d'une sentence du Sénéchal de Guienne, du 4 septembre 1766, d'une part. Et Raquel Dasilva Alpalhao, héritière testamentaire de Jaques Rodrigues son frère, appellante de cette sentence* ... [Signés: Me. Lamothe, avocat; Me. Duvigneau, procureur.] Bordeaux, 1768. 36 pp. fol.

¹³ *Griefs d'appel. Pour le sieur Louis Lafitte* ... *Contre la Dame Judith Alvarés Corcho* ... [Signés: Me. Dubergier, avocat; Me. Deslix, procureur.] n.p., [1771.] 52 pp. fol.; *Mémoire pour dame Judith Alvarés Corcho, épouse du sieur Isaac-Castro Chacon* ... *séparée d'avec lui quant aux biens* ... *Contre le sieur Louis Lafitte* ... [Signé: Me. de Lisleferme, avocat.] Bordeaux, 1772. 39 pp. fol.; *Observations pour Dame Judith Alvarés Corcho* ... [Signés: Me. de

marry Jewish girls there, and *vice versa*: and this gave rise to many a lawsuit to do with dowries, divorce and estate. Such is the well known case of the converted Bordeaux banker, Charles Peixotto.¹⁴ Conflicts over dowries involved also English Jews and Ashkenazim domiciled in France.¹⁵ It is well known that the Lisbon earthquake brought many Marranos to England. Such was the case of Abraham Furtado, but there are many other such less well known cases. Among them was Abraham Rodrigues-Alvarès, who came to London and whose heirs were later involved in a conflict in France over his estate.¹⁶

The frequent wars between France and England greatly affected the economic status of the Jews in both countries. To note but one example for France: the Christian merchants of Bayonne complained that because of the war with England Spain had become the only source for imported wool. Alternatively, the merchants of Holland helped by the Jews of Saint-Esprit were ruining their business. Taking advantage, as citizens of a neutral country, of the right of import, they were discharging, cargoes of wool purchased in Spain in the French ports, and were thus undercutting their French rivals. Thus, Isaac Nunes Tavares of Saint-Esprit discharged in France 503 *chaffs* of wool bought in Spain for the brothers Abraham and Moyse Raphaël Mendes Dacosta of Amsterdam. He declared his intention to ship 177 *chaffs* to Amsterdam and 236 to Havre. In so doing the Dutch merchants were able to reduce the shipping expenses by 10-12 per cent.¹⁷

Jews were involved in a large number of cases concerning seized ships, in various capacities—as owners of French privateers on the—outlook for a chance to seize English ships and those of other

Lisleferme, avocat; Me. Casenave, procureur.] Bordeaux, 1773. 15 pp. fol. *Réplique pour sieur Louis Lafitte . . . Contre la Dame Judith-Alvarès Coreho . . .* [Signés: Me. Dubergier, avocat; Me. Deslix, procureur.] Bordeaux, 1773. 24 pp. fol.

¹⁴ There are many briefs and other printed sources dealing with this case.

¹⁵ *Mémoire pour Samuel Wolff-Oppenheim, juif, commerçant en Angleterre et en France contre Frumité, fille majeure de défunt Abraham Cahen, juif de Metz, Jacob Marem-Lambert et Kelké-Lazara Liberman-Lévy, sa femme et encore contre Moyse Hayem-Being, aussi juif de Metz.* [Signés: Me. Paquin; Me. Panst.] Metz, 1770, 21 pp. 4°.

¹⁶ *Mémoire pour la demoiselle Sara Rodrigues-Furtado . . . Contre Jean-Baptiste-Isaac Augustin Rodrigues Alvarès.* [Signé: Me. Bulit, avocat.] Bordeaux, [1785.] 23 pp. 4°.

¹⁷ Archives of the Chamber of Commerce of Bayonne, BB41.

countries; as owners whose ships had been seized; as merchants who lost their cargos; as underwriters, etc.

In 1712, the author of a brief published in connection with two confiscated ships and involving Samuel Davila of London, who had been born in Saint-Esprit, attacked all Jews as enemies of France.¹⁸ Denis Soares, Joseph Cardose Henriques, George Dias and other Jews of France, England and Holland were involved in the seizure of the ship *Saint Sacrement* on October 17, 1703.¹⁹ The ship *L'Amaralis* was seized in 1745 by the British, and this gave rise to a suit involving Isaac Castro of Saint-Esprit.²⁰ On August 18, 1756, the ship *L'Auguste*, on its way from Port-au-France to Bordeaux, was seized by an English frigate armed with twenty-six cannon and taken into Plymouth. The ship and its cargo were insured for a large sum, and a group of influential Jewish merchants of Bordeaux were among the owners of the cargo or the underwriters: J. David, Jacôme Alexandre, Alexandre junior, Silva junior, Lameyra junior, Daniel Telles Dacosta, J. Henriques, Izaac Sasportes, Aron Peixotto, Azevedo junior, David Mendes.²¹ David Alexandre of Saint-Esprit owned the

¹⁸ *Mémoire pour les armateurs des vaisseaux le Lion & le Prince des Asturies, appellans. Contre les reclamateurs du vaisseau la Marie Galere, intimez.* [Signé: Me. Dufau, avocat.] n.p., n.d., 4 pp. fol.: "Par un jugement du premier mars 1712, il a esté fait main-levée de cette prise . . . qu'on ne s'en serve que pour couvrir le commerce des ennemies, non-seulement des ennemies particuliers de la France, & de l'Espagne, mais des ennemies de toutes les Nations, car ce sont des Juifs pour qui ce vaisseau navigue, & même des Juifs rebelles au Roy."

In another case of confiscation of a ship involving Jews the author gives some curious details regarding the hiring of British pilots for ships with British cargoes: *Mémoire pour Gedeon Bloquet, commandant la barque la découverte de Boulogne, demandeur. Contre Hieronimo de Baros, soit disant propriétaire en partie de vaisseau la Notre-Dame des Anges, deffendeur.* [Signé: Me. Dumesnil.] n.p., n.d., 3 pp. fol. ("On scait que c'est l'usage en Angleterre de faire accompagner les marchandises masquées par un homme de la nation; ce pilote dit avoir esté engagé par un courtier; Hieronimo de Baros soutient qu'il luy a esté donné par Miranda, Manuel Perera [de Baros] son frère dit qu'il luy a esté amené par maistre de vaisseau").

¹⁹ *Mémoire pour Antoine Nogueira de Cette, Capitaine du vaisseau Portugais, nommé le Saint Sacrement . . .* n.p., n.d. 4 pp. fol.; *Mémoire pour François Valchenier . . . Contre Antoine Nogueira . . .* n.p., n.d. fol.

²⁰ *Mémoire pour le sieur Jean-Baptiste Pecarraire . . . et le sieur Izaac Castro . . . Contre sieur Pierre Peconet . . .* [Bordeaux,] n.d. 17 pp. fol.; *Mémoire pour sieur Pierre Peconnet . . .* n.p., n.d. 14 pp. fol.; *Response pour les Srs. Peccarrere & Castro . . .* n.p., n.d. 10 pp. fol.; *Addition de Mémoire pour sieur Pierre Peconet . . .* Bordeaux, n.d. 5 pp. fol.

²¹ *Extrait d'une lettre écrite de Primouth, le 29 août 1756. par le sieur J. Truchasson, Capitaine du navire l'Auguste, à Messieurs Laffon aîné & fils, à Bordeaux,* n.p., n.d. 4 pp. fol.

privateer *Les Gracieux de Bayonne*. In 1761, after a bloody encounter, the captain of this privateer succeeded in bringing into the port of Socoa-Saint-Jean-de Luz the English ship *William and John* which he had seized.²² The ships *Opale* and *Brune*, armed by the Gradis family of Bordeaux, seized four British ships.²³ Jacob Raphaël Pereyre of Saint-Esprit, a partner in the ownership of the privateer *Le Constant*, obtained 1,367 *livres* from the sale of the seized English ship *Stork*.²⁴ A ship with a cargo belonging to Joseph David Gabriel de Silva of Bordeaux, and insured in Marseilles for 32,000 *livres*, was sunk by its captain when attacked by a British corsair.²⁵ Moyse Roderigue—Brandam of Saint-Esprit was engaged in the sale of seized English ships.²⁶ In 1783, the British seized the *Karel den Vyfden* (*le Charles Quint*), with a cargo belonging to Alvarès, Furtado the elder, the brothers Raphaël, and others.²⁷

During the Revolution of 1789, Alexandre of Saint-Esprit owned the ship *Les Deux Amis*, which was armed with eight cannon and whose captain, Etienne Pellot Montvieux, captured five English and twelve Portuguese ships. In 1799, *L'Impromptu*, equipped and armed with 10 cannon by Marq Foy of Saint-Esprit, was seized by the British. Marq Foy thereupon armed another privateer (*Le Buonoparte*) which seized a British ship. *La Légère*, armed in the same year by Castro of Saint-Esprit, was

²² City archives of Bayonne, FF330, 354.

²³ *Jugement du Conseil des Prises, qui confisque, au profit de M. l'Amiral, quatre prises Angloises, faites sans commissions en guerre. Du 31 janvier 1761.* n.p., n.d. 3 pp. 4^r. Reprinted in *Code des prises*. Paris, 1784, I, 535.

²⁴ City archives of Bayonne, FF333.

²⁵ *Précis pour les assureurs sur le corps, armement & marchandises du Senault l'Heureuse Josephe Capitaine la Coste . . . Contre sieur Joseph David Gabriel de Silva, négociant de la ville de Bordeaux, propriétaire & armateur dudit Senault, intimé.* [Signé: L. Arnaud, avocat.] Aix, 1765. 32 pp. fol.

See also: *Mémoire responsif aux écritures fournies par le sieur [Gabriel] Silva au procès pendant eu la Cour . . . [Bordeaux, 1726.]* 7 pp. fol. (One of several briefs dealing with a case between Silva and Pierre Rocaute in connection with Silva's ship *Prophète Samuel de Bordeaux*); *Factum pour sieur François Mathieu aîné . . . Contre sieur Gabriel Silva, Juif banquier de Bordeaux . . . [Bordeaux, 1740.]* 34 pp. fol. (One of many briefs concerning this suit).

²⁶ *Réponse pour le Sr. Pierre Laplanche, négociant de cette Ville [de Bayonne], tant en son nom que comme syndic des actionnaires des corsaires l'Etigny & la Cibelle. Contre sieur Moyse Roderigue-Brandam . . . [Signés: Me. Dubergier, avocat; Me. Destix, procureur.]* n.p., n.d. 17 pp. fol.

²⁷ A printed notarial act of May 1783, without title.

seized by the British, but not before she had brought in a few British and other vessels.²⁸

Interesting, and also valuable as historical documents, are the printed reports about combats involving corsairs armed by Jewish shipowners.²⁹

Many cases involved Jewish shipowners and merchants of Italy and other neutral countries who were exporting merchandise to England. In 1701 the Jewish merchant Uziel of Venice build a ship which was used by another merchant, Renaldo Sora, for the export of grapes to London. On the voyage she was seized by a French corsair. The captain of Uziel's ship protested against the seizure, stating that the Jewish Uziel family had lived in Venice for over 200 years.³⁰ Jacques and Aaron Voltera Emmanuel Levi Delbanco of Venice protested against the seizure in 1694 of their ship, *Bonnaventure*, by the French corsair *Le Glorieux Saint-Joseph*. The ship was on its way with a cargo destined for London.³¹ Emanuel d'Azeveda Silva of Porto, Portugal, exporter of merchandise to England, protested against the seizure of his ship *Saint-Alexis* by the French.³² The same Silva was accused by the captain of the ship *La Victoire*, seized in 1744 by a British corsair, the captain alleging that the seizure was prepared well in advance by Silva.³³

Obviously, any war, or treaty of peace, between England and France, or any other country, had a great influence on

²⁸ R. DUCÉRÉ, *Les Corsaires basques et bayonnais sous la République et l'Empire*, Bayonne, n.d., p. 130. See also E. GINSBURGER, "Les Corsaires juifs," *Revue juive de Genève*, v-49 (1937), 421-24.

²⁹ *Relation des combats livrez [le 18 avril 1757] entre les navires Le Robuste de Bordeaux, armé par M. D. Gradis, & commandé par M. Rozier armé de 24 canons ... 74.hommes d'équipage & 150.volontaires étrangers ... une frégate Anglaise de 36.canons ... & 260.hommes d'équipage, & rejoint par un Corsaire du 16.canons*. Bordeaux, n.d. 4 pp. 4°.

³⁰ *Pour George Fachinetti, Capitaine du vaisseau Venitien nommé la nouvelle Judith ... Contre Louis Lazare Fouquier ... armateur*. [Signé: Me. Chaulce de Chazelle, avocat.] n.p., n.d. 12 pp. fol.: "Uziel est establi à Venise depuis père eu fils, depuis plus de 200 ans; c'est un Venitien Juif, mais sa religion ne change rien à sa naissance n'y à son établissement." See also *REJ*, cxix (1961), 143-51.

³¹ *Factum pour François Büara, capitaine du vaisseau Venitien nommé le Bonnaventure, les sieurs Jacques & Aaron Voltera, & Emmanuel Levi Delbanco, propriétaires dudit vaisseau & de son chargement, reclamateurs. Contre Antoine Montausin, capitaine du vaisseau nommé le glorieux S. Joseph, armateur*. [Signé: Chaulce de Chazelle, avocat.] n.p., n.d. 6 pp. fol.

³² *Factum par Manuel Gomes Flos ...* n.p., n.d. 9 pp. fol.

³³ *Mémoire pour Antoine Duler, commandant la Frégate la Victoire, armée en course au Porte de Bayonne. Contre Jean Pinto Feureiro ... Emanuel d'Azeneda Silva, Portugais, Négociant à Paris*. [Signés: Maboul, rapporteur;

commerce.³⁴ Of special interest for the rôle of Jewish underwriters in maritime insurance is the case of the French privateer *Le Comte de Gramont*. Gradis and Alexandre of Bordeaux agreed to insure the corsair. The day being the Sabbath, they promised to sign the insurance papers on the next day. But then came the news that the corsair had been seized on Thursday, June 9, 1757 by the British. The Parliament of Bordeaux annulled the insurance.³⁵

A brief published in 1680 in connection with the confiscation of a ship contains the otherwise unknown details regarding the rôle of London Jews in the diamond trade. Thus, Aolts and Moyse Nunés of London depatched diamonds to Antwerp by this ship.³⁶

Jewish merchants from England often fell victim to unscrupulous adventurers on the continent. Such was the case of Joseph Azogues, who was arrested in Marseilles as the owner of a ship sunk by the captain in order to get the insurance money for a faked shipment of merchandise consisting of straw and sand.³⁷

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Me. Duprat, avocat.] Paris, 1744. 24 pp. 4°. In the copy of the BN in Paris, the word "Paris" in the title has been corrected by hand to "Porto".

³⁴ *Mémoire sur l'affaire pendante à l'audience. Pour les sieurs Strafforello & Peragallo . . . Contre sieur Moyse-Salomon Pezaro, négociant de la ville de Ferrare . . .* [Signé: A. Jouse, avocat.] Aix, 1782. 24 pp. fol.; *Précis du procès pendant à l'audience, pour le sieur Pezaro, négociant de la Ville de Ferrare. Contre les sieurs Strafforello & Peragallo . . .* [Signé: Dubreuil cadet, avocat.] Aix, 1784. 42 pp. fol.: "Le sieur Moyse-Salomon Pezaro donne commission aux Srs. Strafforello & Paragallo d'acheter à Marseille, pour son compte, une certaine quantité de sucres & des cafés. Ceux-ci se chargent de la commission, mais ils diffèrent de l'exécuter." "A cette époque la paix se traitoit entre la France & l'Angleterre . . . les négociants . . . s'arrêterent dans leurs spéculations, les commissionnaires sur-tout s'abstinrent d'effectuer les ordres de leurs commettants."

³⁵ *Mémoire responsif pour les sieurs Castro Chacon, Isaac Henriques Castro & autres assureurs de la Ville de Bayonne, intimés, Contre sieur Pierre-Antoine Baeres . . . appelant d'un sentence de l'Amirauté de Bayonne dy 26 avril 1758.* [Signés: Bouquier, avocat; Me. Dezest, procureur.] n.p., n.d. 32 pp. fol.

³⁶ *Plaise à Nosseigneurs de la Cour des Aydes . . . Pour Alvaro Dacosta & Samuel Sapporas marchands ioualliers à Londres, appellans d'une sentence du Juge des Traittes de Calais, du 10 février 1680. Contre maistre Nicolas Saudnier, fermier Général des Fermes Unies, intimé.* [Signé: M. le Coussin, avocat.] n.p., n.d. 3 pp. fol.

³⁷ *Mémoire instructif, pour Joseph Azogues, Juif de Nation, querellé, & prisonnier détenu aux prisons de ce Palais.* [Signé: Chery, avoc.] Marseille, n.d. 28 pp. fol.: "Azogues partit de Londres . . . dans le dessin de passer en France . . . & de là aller à Ste. Croix de Barbarie pour des affaires de son commerce . . . à Marseille . . . il y trouva [Thomas] Colle ["Anglois, fugitif de son pays, se disant Noble sans l'être, & cachant son véritable nom, qui est Botter"], avec lequel il fit malheureusement connaissance . . ."

*Testate Succession in Jewish Law**

AMONG the provisions of talmudic law still applying to this day are the rules of testamentary disposition. Civil as well as rabbinical courts of Israel quite often go into details of *halakhah* when dealing with the probate of wills, and many a quotation from Scripture and rabbinic tradition may be found in their judgments. There lies, however, a certain irony in the circumstance that Jewish law itself did not know any such institution as probate. Unlike present-day procedure, the Talmud vested the estate in the heirs by law, no executorship being necessary. Succession would never be brought before a Jewish court unless a dispute had arisen between the parties.

Surprising though it may sound, confirmation of wills was introduced into rabbinical procedure by a Moslem government under Christian influence. The Church, as is well known, had always claimed jurisdiction over the testaments of her members, reserving to her courts the right of granting probate and of interpreting their wills. The "last will" of a deceased person was, indeed, connected with his last confession and often included gifts for his spiritual benefit, *pro anima sua*. The Ottoman government therefore allowed the tribunals of the Christian communities to confirm the wills of their members. The rabbinical courts having secured corresponding powers, they accepted the institution into their procedure which was then given recognition by the government.

There was room for a historical and comparative study of these rules, and this has now been filled by Dr. Reuven Yaron, lecturer in Roman Law in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who by his publications on the sources of ancient law as well as by the book under consideration, is assigning to Jewish law its due place among the other legal systems.

Yaron constantly uses the comparative method, keeping, however a balanced and careful attitude towards similarities. He is aware of the fact that "similar problems tend to be tackled in similar or at any rate comparable ways, even in systems which are completely independent of each other". In this respect the author has, surpassed his teacher, the late Professor J. J. Rabinowitz,

* REUVEN YARON, *Gifts in Contemplation of Death in Jewish and Roman Law*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1960, pp. xiv + 250. 35s.

who tended to over-emphasise Jewish influence on other legal systems: Cf. the detailed criticism by the author in the *J.S.S.* iv, 1959, p. 308 f.

A major problem of methodology is tackled, for instance, in the second chapter of the book, which deals with the post-exilic Aramaic papyri. Yaron is right in limiting conclusions as to the *Jewishness* of the law expressed in these documents, "if by Jewish law one means the law used by the Jews where they lived in larger concentrations and enjoyed jurisdiction of their own". This is again an implied criticism of Rabinowitz's interpretations regarding parallelisms in the Aramaic and talmudic documents. We may, however, ask whether the author has not overstressed the argument. The discussion of course needs prior clarification of the terms. If we are not to call Jewish any law obtaining among Jews, the question must be put whether, indeed, there existed a pure Jewish law. Biblical legislation seems to be based to a large extent on the common oriental heritage, subject to reforms by special statutes. The same principle holds good with the talmudic sources. In fact a fraction only dates from biblical exegesis and the larger part of the rules are to be understood against oriental or Greek backgrounds. On these elements we have much to learn from the important researches of Professor I. F. Baer in *Zion* xvii, 1952. The data given there are to be taken as examples of the general tendency of Jewish legal practice.

Yaron's statement on the law of the papyri could, therefore, easily be extended (*cum grano salis*) to biblical and talmudic law in general. It would not be appropriate, in the opinion of the reviewer, to draw the line according to the percentage of foreign and native elements respectively. A reasonable alternative to the "purist" attitude would be a definition that treated as Jewish any law applied by Jewish courts of justice for a considerable time. On such a premise, we should have to consider the Aramaic papyri as a legitimate link in the legal tradition of the Jews. Information obtained from these documents is all the more important since it sheds light on the dark age between Bible and Talmud. When all reservations and distinctions have been made, there still remains a basic similarity between the rabbinical and the Elephantine formularies which definitely reflects Jewish tradition. The latter, it is true, is based mainly on common oriental, Egyptian or Hellenistic customs. In the same sense we may also say that nowadays

confirmation of wills has become part of Jewish law. (For further examples from the present see *De'oth*, Journal of the religious students, Passover 1959, p. 40; *Rosh Ha-Shanah* 1959, p. 52).

Another argument of the author also deserves special attention, because it touches again upon a point of method: "Substance and form are to be considered separately. The fact that a phrase is Jewish does not prove that the provision which it helps to express is also Jewish" (p. 12). While generally agreeing with this warning, the reviewer would rather correct his definition accordingly: Wherever a foreign concept was so assimilated that it could be expressed by a native term, there must have been present the catalytic conditions for such a process of reception. We should then look for a possible parallel native tradition allowing the foreign institution to become part and parcel of the receiving culture.

On the other hand, a similar *caveat* is perhaps due in the opposite case when the author makes the following statement: "Like every other legal system, the Jewish one has absorbed and assimilated some foreign elements to such an extent that it is no longer possible to prove the reception; in such cases the institution in question looks absolutely indigenous. Where, however, foreign terms, like *epitropos*, *hypotheke* or *prosbol* (to give only a few examples) are introduced, there is *prima facie* evidence that the institution is new to Jewish law, most probably—though not necessarily—taken over together with its name from a foreign system" (p. 19). Ought we not make the same distinction between contents and term as proposed by Yaron himself? Jewish law may have known these institutions beforehand, and common parlance have taken over the corresponding term from technical language.

II

Yaron's book opens with a discussion of early law. *Chapter 1* denies the existence of evidence for testate succession in biblical sources, though a man is said to have been entitled to distribute his estate among his future heirs without changing their respective shares. This statement is, indeed, the cornerstone of the author's thesis about "considerable Hellenistic influence on the nascent talmudic law of dispositions in contemplation of death" (p. viii). For if no biblical origin of the institution could be found, and there existed far-reaching similarities to contemporary Hellenistic

procedure, the thesis would seem to be irrefutable. We shall examine it below.

The author next considers the Aramaic papyri, one of which witnesses a gift in contemplation of death, the other providing for the manumission of a slave-woman after the death of her owner. Since the papyri are not considered proper evidence for Jewish law, the existence of these dispositions is held of little bearing on the question of talmudic testament.

Terminology is discussed in *Ch. 3*, showing the various meanings of *diatheke* (the author adopts the 'hebraising' transcription *deyathiqi*), *mattannah*, *ha-kohev nekhasaw*, *shekhiv me-ra'*, and *bari'*. An important conjecture is made with regard to the wording of the will. Instead of the formula preserved in the Talmud: *tehe' liy la'amod welihyoth*, the reading should be: *tehe' liy la'amod welihyoth*, expressing a wish for the continued life of the testator. This is, indeed, one of the author's most impressive results. His hypothesis was the result of the comparison with Greek documents, and he had the satisfaction of later seeing his reading confirmed in a manuscript of the Talmud (p. 26).

The next chapter describes the bilateral character of talmudic wills. There is, according to Yaron, always need for an "act of acquisition" in favour of the donee, even though quite often without the latter's knowledge. The possible reasons for the lack of unilateral dispositions are listed together with a remark as to the basic similarity or dissimilarity to Greek and Roman concepts. Finally some explanations are given on the Jewish form of conveyance, and especially on "acquisition by kerchief".

The basic ideas of the talmudic will are discussed in *Ch. 5*, on "Exclusion from the Inheritance". Yaron analyzes Mishnah *B.B.* viii, 5 and the corresponding passages against the background of the initial tendency prohibiting disinheritance. This leads him to explain some earlier forms of intervention with the rules of intestate succession, *viz.* by interdiction of the heir from the estate, dismissal and compensation.

Ch. 6 traces the native development of the Greco-Egyptian forms, once they had been introduced into rabbinic jurisprudence. Egyptian Jews, he assumes, had brought to Palestine the custom of dispositions by the Greek form of *diathēkē* or by the Egyptian counterpart, the *meta tēn teleutēn* gift.

The latter was termed by the sages *mattannah* (later *mattenath*

*bari*²), an irrevocable gift taking effect after the testator's death. It was only in the middle-ages that this disposition was allowed to be made revocable by the inclusion of a proper condition. Talmudic *mattenath bari*³, however, was an actual conveyance, being limited, therefore, to property in existence at the moment of disposition.

The parallel form, *diatheqe* (later called *mattenath shekhiv me-ra'*) is treated in *Ch. 7*. Having dealt with the various sources, the author sums up the probable development of the institution—from revocation being possible on special conditions only, through revocation by virtue of recovery, *diatheqe* is, finally, declared revocable at will even prior to recovery. At the same time a parallel process may be observed as regards *mattenath shekhiv me-ra'* purporting to be irrevocable. While it is considered void by early sources, it is later annulled only if comprising all the donor's goods, then assimilated to the ordinary *diatheqe* and made revocable on recovery, and finally declared irrevocable if made in a certain form.

After *Ch. 8*, which examines the time when the transfer to the heir takes place, *Ch. 9* deals with *ipso facto* revocation by the testator's recovery. Then comes the explanation of the amoraic rules about wills dealing with part only of the testator's property (*Ch. 10*), and wills including a formal act of acquisition (*Ch. 11*). *Ch. 12* brings forward cases of imminent danger other than illness, which raise the question whether the testator be considered *shekhiv me-ra'*.

The principle *mišwah leqayyem divrey ha-meth* is the topic of *Ch. 13*. This is, according to the author, a kind of *fideicommissum* appearing in the talmudic sources during the second century C.E. We shall revert to this point. *Ch. 14* considers the various clauses used in the Jewish will, showing parallels in many sources—Nuzi, Greek, Aramaic, Demotic, Roman and Coptic. There follows a chapter on the liability of the estate for the testator's debts and the rule, connected therewith, against repudiation of the inheritance.

Capacity of donors and classes of donees are discussed in *Chapters 16* and *17*, while *Ch. 18* describes, rather summarily, testamentary clauses included in marriage contracts. The following chapters deal with cases of insufficiently named donees, joint and consecutive heirs, and gifts of *usufruct* only. Finally the author

treats of questions of mistake, presumed intentions and interpretation. There is a useful index of sources and subjects.

III

In a work dealing with such a variety of problems and proposing so many interesting views, the reader is bound to find some points with which to differ. The following comments are made to complete the picture or to test the author's case.

The Hebrew law of succession, like other customs, must be understood against the background of the patriarchal age. In the tribal society then existing in Israel the chieftain seemed to have enjoyed full *patria potestas*, including the power of life and death over members of the clan. It was against this privilege that *Deut.* xxi: 18 demanded public justice, a common legal system having been meanwhile introduced.

Although the paternal rights usually devolved upon the first-born, it was nevertheless customary to bestow a blessing on this son, declaring his succession to the leadership. In accordance with the *patria potestas* the right of primogeniture could be transferred to a younger son more deserving of the office. Again, this privilege of the father was abolished in the course of the centralisation of justice, as shown by *Deut.* xxi: 16 (Cf. *JJS* ix, 1958, p. 202).

The author's question (p. 4) whether Abraham's dismissal of the sons of the concubines was "contrary to the law of succession", should, therefore be answered in the negative. This was, however, not due to the sons' special status but to the original power of disposition. In Hebrew society, as rightly pointed out by D. R. Mace (*Hebrew Marriage*, London 1953, pp. 206, 210), there was no thought of the ovum but merely of the male seed: "Hence the complete absence in Hebrew thought of our modern thought of legitimacy". We may, therefore, assume that sons of concubines had the same rights as did the children of the chief wife to both the name and the inheritance of their common father. Only in later times, during the campaign against mixed marriages, a rule was built up making the children belong to the mother and not to the father where there was no *conubium*. In pre-exilic times, on the other hand, the children belonged to the father and were, consequently, of equal status. Abraham, thus, actually changed the rule of succession and a similar change was made by Jacob (*Gen.* xlviii: 22, xlix: 4, against the author, p. 8).

Even *Deut.* xxi: 16-17 still reflects the original character of Hebrew succession. The occasion spoken of is "the day on which one causes one's sons to inherit", which is shortly before death when time has come to give the blessing and to distribute the property. Legally, the father is free to fix the shares according to his will, the law merely induces him to use his power equitably. This interpretation was, incidentally, already given in the second century C.E. by 'Abba Hanan (*B.B.* 130a).

Num. xxvii: 8-11, on the other hand, is not at all a case of true intestate succession. The act spoken of is a "transfer" or "donation" of the estate to a relative, the term *succession* evidently being reserved to denote the inheritance of sons only. A man lacking male issue did not, apparently, care to divide his goods before death; the question thus arose as to who should inherit him. Had he left sons surviving, the estate would have been divided according to his will.

A similar practice seems to be the underlying idea of *Jer.* iii: 18-19: "... and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers. But I said, How shall I put you among the children, and give you a pleasant land, a good heritage of the hosts of nations. And I said, you shall call me, my father, and shall not turn away from me". God is shown in this passage as a father distributing his goods by will amongst his children, giving the best part to the beloved one. This is by no means a mere "distribution", subject to the rule of equal shares, as suggested by the author with regard to other biblical passages showing dispositions by will (p. 6).

Testate succession, thus, seems to be an ancient Hebrew custom, limited only by the law of primogeniture. As late a writer as Sirach (xxx: 19) clearly refers to dispositions by will in favour of a "son, wife, friend or brother". Yaron's interpretation within the limits of distribution (p. 8) does not take account of the fact that some of the donees mentioned are not legal heirs at all. A donation *mortis causa* in favour of the widow is spoken of in *Judith* viii: 7, while legacies to some of the children are referred to in *Jubilees* xlv: 16 and the *Testament of Job* xlv-xlvi (harmonizing *Job* xlii: 16 and *Num.* xxvii: 8).

In the discussion of pre-talmudic sources reference should also be made to the *benin dikhrin* clause (cf. L. M. Epstein, *The Jewish Marriage Contract*, New York 1927, p. 124 f. and now the Greek

papyrus Murabbaat 116). By this clause, which was in use long before the formulation of Mishnah *Keth.* iv. 10, the husband contracted out of the ordinary rules of inheritance. The application of the clause was, therefore, limited by later authorities to cases where there existed a surplus to be divided according to law. True, the clause in most cases affected only the woman's dowry and special property administered during their common life by the husband. The author himself, however, is well aware of the importance of this clause as a disposition in contemplation of death (p. 176 f.), but he did not, unfortunately, point out its early date. The reviewer is of the opinion that the clause reflects the early positive attitude towards the testament, which was quite independent of the idea of *diatheke*.

The chapter on terminology should, indeed, have given account of additional terms in order to show the ancient phases of the institution under consideration. Two of them, rarely used indeed, are not mentioned at all, viz., *sheṭar peqadta* (*Giṭṭin* 50 b; a similar meaning, perhaps, is to be recognised in *Ps.* cix: 8) and the Latin term *legaŋon* (*San.* 91 a). But even in the passages quoted by the author there are other expressions which might have been useful in this context, like *ha'omer yittenu*, *ha-meḥaleq*, and *ha-meṣawweh meḥamath mithah*. Since these latter terms denote oral dispositions, the reviewer wonders whether they do not represent the early form of the talmudic will. Both *paqad* and *ṣiwwah* have a similar meaning already in biblical sources, which is *prima facie* evidence for the existence of tradition. The ancient will was, consequently, not made by deed but by mere word of mouth, in the form of a *fideicommissum*. This was long before the introduction of the written testament, the *diatheke*.

Despite the opinion of R. Eliezer a will might, even in talmudic times, be made orally without any legal form. Though generally there could be no conveyance without a formal act of acquisition (*qinyan*), there was no need for this when disposing of one's goods *mortis causa*. "R. Naḥman said: The gift of a *shekiv me-ra'* (i.e., without writing or act of acquisition-Z.W.F.) is valid by rabbinical enactment, lest his mind be disturbed" (*B.B.* 147 b). Such a disposition was truly unilateral like Greek and Roman testaments, the testator merely expressing his will, and the heirs or the other persons present being supposed to act upon it. A good testimony of its unilateral character is furnished by the case

quoted in the argument against R. Eliezer: "It once happened that the mother of the Sons of Rokhel was ill and said, Give my veil to my daughter, and it was worth twelve hundred denars. And when she died they fulfilled her words" (ibid.).

Yaron's evidence for the bilateral character of the talmudic will relates in fact to a *diatheke*, i.e., a written testament (p. 32). A deed being a form of acquisition in ordinary conveyances, we must understand that the sages applied to the written will the corresponding rule of acquisition. The talmudic *diatheke*, thus, became a bilateral instrument like any other conveyance.

The oral will being definitely of native origin, we may, perhaps, agree with the author as to the derivation of the written will. In his view the tannaitic period knew the Greek term *diatheke* only for the testament, while the Hebrew counterpart, *mattenath shekiv me-ra'*, dates from amoraic times (p. 28). But is the latter term not implied already in the Mishnah (*Pe'ah* iii, 7, *B.B.* ix, 6; see also *B.T. B.B.* 146b, 147a)? The reviewer ventures the hypothesis that beside the Hellenistic *diatheke* there existed in Palestine two native forms of written wills, the *sheṭar peqadta*, a kind of *fideicommissum*, and the *mattanah*, being an application of the ordinary conveyance for the purposes of testators.

The wording of *diatheke*, as shown by Yaron, was taken over from Hellenistic texts, but the parallel *formulae* of *mattanah* seem to be Semitic-Jewish and not related to the Egyptian *meta tēn teleutēn* gift, (against pp. 26, 114, 120). The phrases *meha-yom wle-'aḥar mithah* or *beḥayyim wve-maweth* are similar to the phrase used in the ordinary conveyance *min yoma' zenah we'ad 'olam* or to the Biblical *me'attah we'ad 'olam*. True, there are different functions and meanings attached to the ordinary phrase and to that included in the will, but the reviewer has the feeling that the latter is an adaptation of the former. Whereas the *diatheke*, according to the Greek example, was to take effect after death only, the *mattanah* conveyed the property at death with retroactive effect from the day of signature or delivery. The same meaning should be accorded to the term *ha-kothev nekhasaw*, which is the answer to the problem put on p. 79 why the slave of an Israelite should be allowed heave-offerings. In the course of time, naturally, the terms mentioned may have changed their meanings, so that we might find later sources conflicting with the definition given above. We are here concerned only with the original forms.

Discussing the possibilities of disinheritance, the author interprets Mishnah *B.B.* viii, 5 as a single entity (p. 37 f.). In his view, accordingly, the whole passage expresses opposition to such a practice. If, however, we look, somewhat closer at the text, we may come to a different conclusion. Dividing and re-arranging the different parts of the Mishnah according to the terms used therein, three parallel sources on the same subject-matter can be distinguished:

I: ha'-omer — "Whoever says, X my first-born shall not receive a double portion . . . has said nothing . . .

Whoever says, X shall inherit from me, himself having a daughter . . . has said nothing . . .

R. Joḥanan ben Baroqa says: If he said this of one that was qualified to inherit from him, his words stand . . ."

II: ha-mehaleq — "Whoever apports his goods to his sons . . . made the firstborn equal with them, his words stand.

But if he said (*'amar*) that it should be so by inheritance, he has said nothing.

If he wrote (*kathav*) at the beginning, in the middle or at the end that it should be as a gift, his words stand".

III: ha-kohev — "Whoever assigns his goods to others and left out his son, what he has done is done, but the Sages have no pleasure in him.

R. Simon ben Gamaliel says: Yet if his sons had not behaved aright, he will be remembered for good".

Only the anonymous author of source I does not recognize any disinheritance. Source III has mere moral objections, while R. Yoḥanan ben Baroqa and source II allow disinheritance under certain conditions. Taking into consideration the change of terminology in source II, the reviewer even dares to express a doubt whether the two latter sentences are not interpolations added by the final editor. The original text, using the term *ha-mehaleq*, would then have been in favour of testate succession even where disinheritance was the result. Later on a limiting statement from a source using the term *'amar* was added, and finally the third sentence, taken from a source using the term *kathav*, was inserted in order to qualify the second statement. In any case, the author's thesis (p. 37) that "in Jewish law no one is entitled to disinherit his heirs expressly", seems to go beyond the evidence, at least of the

passages cited. R. Yoḥanan ben Baroqa's opinion does not "concern merely the question of terminology" (p. 38), but expressly validates changes of the rules of succession (cf. the interpretation of *Deut.* xxi: 16 given in *B.B.* 130a mentioned above). A positive attitude towards testation in favour of non-heirs is also expressed by the Mishnah *B.B.* ix, 7 and Tosefta *Ketuboth* vi, 10.

IV

Let us finish with some further remarks:

p. 36: Mention should be made of *Ruth* iv: 7 and J. Neubauer, *Beiträge z. Geschichte d. bibl. talm. Eheschliessungsrechts* (*Mitteil. d. vorderasiat. Gesellsch.* 24), Leipzig 1920, p. 145 f.

p. 74: The reviewer would not suggest an emendation, where there are two parallel texts, and R. Ḥoni's sister does not seem to have been ill during the whole period.

p. 91: Samuel might, perhaps, have relied upon Tosefta, *B.B.* viii, 9.

p. 112, 119: Cf. Tosefta, *Ma'aser Shen* v, 8.

p. 130: Cf. Mishnah, *'Arakhin* v, 4, and Tosefta, *ibid.* iii, 14; Mishnah, *Bekhoroth* viii, 3-4.

p. 150-1: The rule is the extreme result of the tendency towards severing all links between the proselyte and his gentile family.

p. 153: Cf. *Tarbiz* xxiii, 1952, p. 14.

p. 174: Cf. Epstein, *Jewish Marriage Contract*, p. 121 f.

p. 228: Cf. the rabbinical interpretation of *ben* in the Bible, e.g., *Mekhilta, Pisha*, xi (*end*) on *Ex.* xii: 24; and, on the other hand, the LXX and rabbinical exegesis of *Deut.* xxv: 5. See also the expression "male sons" in the Aramaic papyri and the *benin dikhrin* clause.

While the reviewer has not been able to accept all the writer's conclusions, nobody will fail to be impressed by his wealth of material and by his analytical capacities. May the book be followed before long by a series of historical monographs of the same quality, on the various institutions of Jewish law.

Jerusalem

ZEEV W. FALK

- S. HOLM-NIELSEN, *Hodayot, Psalms from Qumran*. Acta Theologica Danica, vol. ii, Aarhus, Universitetsforlaget, 1960. 8vo, pp. 366. 50 Danish crowns.

This volume contains an annotated translation of the Judaean manuscript now generally known as *IQH*, the Qumran Hymns from Cave 1, and deals, under four headings, with such topics as the theology of the Hymns, the use in them of the Old Testament, their literary origin, and their *Sitz im Leben*. The whole manuscript (including the fragments) receives here very extensive treatment, although one feels that the book would have lost nothing in quality if it had been considerably shorter. Thus, the commentary is often quite unnecessarily circumstantial in its dealings with suggestions which have either already been proved wrong, or obviously are wrong; there are also too many references to Old Testament lexicography, much of which is quite irrelevant to the Hymns and could have been omitted altogether. Similarly in the concluding chapters, which read very fluently, some readers will probably find that the author for all his words, but skims the surface of *Hodayoth* research.

The author holds that the Hymns should not be regarded as having been written by one man, e.g. the Teacher of Righteousness, but that the 'I' has a general reference. It is asserted that it is collective, standing for the community as a whole; but if this is to be taken in the sense in which some of the biblical Psalms are collective, although composed in the 1st person singular, then the suggestion becomes (in my view) preposterous. I am unable to see how, in these poems, the 'I' can refer to the community pure and simple. It must refer to an individual, namely to the one reciting the Hymn concerned. Holm-Nielsen, in discussing the *Sitz im Leben* of the Hymns, confines himself to discussing whether the latter were used in the 'cult' or not, without attempting to define the actual 'cultic' situation in which these compositions may have been used. There is admittedly a difficulty here, which may be due to the fact that although some scholars would classify them as belonging to Gunkel's *Danklieder des Einzelnen*, the same scholars would acknowledge that the biblical pattern characteristic of that type has, in these compositions, more or less disintegrated. The latter circumstance may be one of the reasons why it is sometimes assumed that all, or at any rate some of them, are but lyrical poems in which the poet expresses in biblical language his private feelings and unhappy experiences, and that they were consequently never meant to play a part in communal worship. According to this interpretation (with which Holm-Nielsen disagrees) the Hymns are therefore autobiographical, and the 'I' is a definite personality. Thus J. P. Hyatt explicitly links this autobiographical interpretation with the view that the form of these hymns is not very close to Gunkel's category (see *New Testament Studies*, 1956, pp. 276 ff), and a similar observation has been made by A. Baillet in an article in *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique*, 1956, pp. 129 ff, of which the author of the book under review does not seem to know. Furthermore, no less a scholar than W. H. Brownlee is keenly aware that the autobio-

graphical theory entails the view that the Hymns were not meant for communal worship (see *New Testament Studies*, 1956-57, pp. 12 ff and 195 ff). It is clear that if the 'I' refers to the author himself, the Hymns (provided they were in fact all written by the same man) will contain valuable information about the character of some member within the sect, and they may then not have been written for a communal purpose; if, on the other hand, the 'I' has a general reference, then the Hymns could have been written for a communal purpose, and any member of the community would identify himself with the 'I' and would make the references to suffering and salvation the object of pious contemplation for the purpose of his own personal edification. Taken in the latter way the experiences described become typical and emblematic, and the Hymns would have a general and timeless appeal. It is to be noted that the problem is not whether the author uses figurative language; it is rather whether he describes his own private feelings and religious experiences in terms which rang familiar to himself, or whether the supposedly personal hymns were composed by one or more learned men who, being well versed in biblical language and thought-patterns, cultivated the art of hymn-composition for the edification of their fellow-members.

In my view—and in this I disagree with the author of the book under review—the question of dependence of biblical phraseology as such has no bearing on the *Sitz im Leben* of these compositions. The problem is rather more subtle than that, and may be formulated this way: Is the 'I' of the poet(s) identical with, or different from, the 'I' of the worshipper? A combination of these two extremes would be to say that the Hymns were originally autobiographical, but were later used liturgically at the divine services of the sect. The obvious difficulty here is to suppose that these Hymns, some of which are emotionally very personal and structurally very irregular, could ever have been recited communally by the members of the sect; and although Holm-Nielsen is inclined to think that they were used 'liturgically' by the community, it seems to me that the simplest solution of the problem is to suppose that the compositions are autobiographical, and that they were recited by the author(s) in the midst of the brethren. I am of course thinking of those hymns only in which the 1st person singular is used. And because of the variety of the poems preserved, we should very likely suppose also that they were composed by several authors, all members of the society, but of different standing within it. Looked at in this way, the Hymns were composed for the benefit of the members, and were recited at their religious meetings. We are led in the same direction by the fact that the Hymns contain theological expositions which have a distinctly didactic and edificatory purpose: and it may be relevant here to draw attention to the fact that S. Mowinckel, in his important work *Offersang und Sangoffer* (of which an English edition is under preparation), has shown that a didactic and edificatory purpose is inherent in the very character of the biblical thanksgiving psalm. This point, which is fundamental to the understanding of the *Sitz im Leben* of the Hymns has, as far as I can see, escaped the author of the book under review entirely. Scholars

have already pointed to the clearly didactic purpose of certain sections of these compositions in which biblical imagery, transformed and re-interpreted, is applied to an extensive degree; and the *Sitz im Leben* of the Hymns has been brilliantly—and I think, correctly—dealt with by S. Mowinckel, in his contribution to the *Rowley Festschrift* (see *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, ed. M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas, pp. 205 ff), an article which has escaped Holm-Nielsen's notice. The dependence of the Hymns on the biblical psalms suggests that the former should be seen as representing a further development of an already existing literary tradition—which is another way of saying that they were not written by a single author for his own private sake, but were composed anonymously by, presumably, several authors belonging to a school of psalm composition which based itself on already existing patterns. But although one becomes convinced of this by an examination of the formal criteria in the Hymns, the deeply personal character of many of them forces one to pause before asserting that they were in fact recited by the members communally. In my opinion the 'I', wherever it is used in *IQH*, refers to an individual, and it seems to me that Mowinckel has given the only possible answer to the question of the place in the 'cult' of such compositions: like the classical *Danklieder des Einzelnen*, they were recited by their authors in the midst of the community. In the Wisdom circles of Late Judaism it was at once an art, freely modelled on the classical prototypes, and an act of devotion to compose a psalm for recitation in the midst of the brethren, and *IQH* contains examples of such compositions produced by pious individuals who possessed the requisite gift, and who recited them, to the edification and instruction of their fellow members, in the midst of the community. This is no more than a perpetuation of the situation out of which the Individual Thanksgiving Psalms of the Psalter indisputably grew, and it is the only situation which explains in a satisfactory manner the hymns of *IQH*. Some such theory would also throw some light on the uneven character of the Hymns taken as a whole. Some of them describe experiences which could have been sustained by any member of the community; but others appear—at least on the face of it—to have been written by prominent or particularly responsible leading members. However, the latter category is not easy to define because, on the one hand, the purpose of guiding, admonishing, instructing, and edifying the members as a whole could in the nature of the case be expected to appear in all compositions alike, and not only in those by leading members; and on the other, the communal need for edification and instruction would naturally impose certain restrictions on the poet, particularly if he were outstanding by virtue of his holding a special position in the community and his having sustained a unique religious experience the lesson of which he would fain impart to his fellow members.

The author seems to have written parts of this book in too great a hurry. The translation is full of inaccuracies which could easily have been avoided with a little more care, and the commentary, apart from much superfluous material, contains some quite appalling errors. There

are also some indications that Holm-Nielsen has not consulted the facsimile as much as he should have done, but has been content to rely on Sukenik's in many ways brilliant, but not perfect, transcription.

Here are some brief comments on the translation. i. 29, מבעי רוחות does not mean 'the utterances of the spirits'; the phrase is clearly the plural of מבע רוח used in the same line, and the *nomen rectum* has assumed the plural form as sometimes happens in compound expressions; a better translation would be 'utterances of spirit' (i.e. 'articulate speech'). In ii. 13 'a knowing interpreter of wonderful mysteries' is both clumsy and ungrammatical, since דעת is not the qualification, but the object of מליץ. In iii. 15 על means 'at', not 'over'; and in iii. 16 ב means 'with', not 'by'. In iv. 12 להתפש במצודותם is translated 'that they be caught in their nets'; but the parallel passage in 1. 19 shows that it means 'with the result that they are caught in their own nets' (consequently the following כי means 'for', not 'but'). In v. 12 הגלות is wrongly taken as *hiph'il* infinitive; the context clearly shows that it is *niph'al*. And why the stilted and meaningless translation 'a people from the meek' of עם ענוים in v. 21? In v. 25 ילכו רכיל וברז is rendered wrongly and ungrammatically: 'with the secret ... they go round with slander'. In v. 32 'and my glory is changed into destruction' is a misleading if not, indeed, meaningless translation of והודי נהפך למשחית which, as the usage in *Dan. x: 8* shows, refers to the complete change of complexion due to fear. In vi. 7, instead of 'And I will take comfort above the noise of the people' I would suggest 'And I will comfort (i.e. revenge) myself upon the crowd'—a phrase reflecting the martial and blood-thirsty element in Qumran theology which is explicitly formulated in *IQM passim*, and is expressed even in a quasi-quietistic manuscript like *IQS* (viii. 6 f, 10, x. 19). The idiom השיב על occurs in *IQH* i.26, vii.29, and xii.30, and Holm-Nielsen translates as if the expression simply means 'to answer'. He appears to have overlooked that the phrase (which is used also in *IQS* xi.18) means 'oppose', 'protest against', as H. Yalon suggested several years ago. In xiv.17 the meaning of an entire line is obscured by persistent misunderstanding of the Hebrew: "But I have insight through the abundance of Thy goodness, and through the oath whereby I have bound myself upon my life"; this is a very amateurish translation of a straightforward Hebrew sentence, which means: 'I know Thy great goodness, but by oath I have pledged myself (not to sin against Thee)'.

P. WERNBERG-MØLLER

J. MAIER, *Die Texte vom Toten Meer*. Band I: Übersetzung. Band II: Anmerkungen. Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, Munich-Basle, 1960. 8vo, pp. 190 and 232. Both vols. DM 24.

These two volumes contain the first edition in German with a complete, annotated translation of the non-biblical Qumran manuscripts, namely *IQS*, *Zad. Fragm.s*, *IQH*, *IQM*, *IQpHab.*, *IQGen. Ap.*, *IQ14*, *IQ22*, *IQ27*, *IQSa*, *IQSh*, *4QPnab.*, *4QpPs. 37*, *4QPatr.*, *4QTest.*, *4QFlor.*, *4QpIsa. a. b. c. d.*, *4QpHos. a. b.* in that order.

The general reader will find in this work well-informed and competent guidance on most of the complex and controversial issues raised by the discovery of the 'Scrolls'; but the specialist also can learn much from it, both from the cautious and balanced views which the author generally propounds, and from the numerous erudite details which he has so diligently and skilfully collected.

The translations are excellent, and difficult passages are fully discussed, sometimes non-committally. The author does not indulge in hypothetical reconstructions of the text where the latter is only fragmentarily preserved. One notices with interest the arrangement in *stichoi* of certain sections of *IQS*, *Zad. Fragm.s*, and *IQM* (see, e.g., in *IQS*: i. 1-11, ii. 2-4, 5-9, 15-17, iii. 1-12, 25-iv. 26, v. 1-7, 10-13, vii. 2-10, ix. 3-5, 12-21, 22-xi. 22). The question of a possible metrical structure of these apparently prose compositions would be well worth a detailed examination; to the reviewer's knowledge, it has never been properly carried out, although scholars have made references to the problem from time to time. It is well known that the difficulty of scanning is still unsolved even in the case of *IQH* which contains poetry from beginning to end—although, admittedly, in the last mentioned case the difficulties are largely (but not entirely) due to the poor state of the text.

A couple of details may be noticed here. In *IQS* iv. 1 *sôdh* is translated by 'Wesen', 'Inbegriff einer Sache'; this does not seem to the reviewer a very good suggestion, mainly because of the usage of the word in *IQS* xi. 9 where it clearly has the concrete connotation 'assembly'; the latter meaning is therefore to be preferred in both passages. It is odd that in the notes, for his interpretation of the word in iv. 1 the author should refer to xi. 9 and his note thereon, although neither in the translation of the last mentioned passage nor in the remarks on it does one find anything which supports the author's particular interpretation of *sôdh* in iv. 1. The reviewer was extremely interested to see the author's translation of *nêšêr* in *IQH* vi. 15 'um Schosse zu treiben', with the comment (see vol. ii, p. 91) that *nêšêr* (which also occurs in *IQH* vii. 19, viii. 6, 8, 10) is used collectively in the Hymns, as indeed already in *Isa.* lx: 21. Perhaps the reviewer may be permitted to draw attention to an unpublished paper which he read at the summer meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study at Exeter in 1958, where he elaborated on precisely the same theme. The word *nêšêr* is nowhere in biblical Hebrew used of a single shoot, and the same collective usage is found in *IQH* where the word should not be interpreted as referring to the Messiah, but to the community as a collective entity. It is also very interesting to notice that the author of the long hymn in *IQH* viii obviously had *Isa.* xi: 1 in mind, for he took the words *nêšêr*, *gêza'*, and *shôrêsh* from that passage and applied these metaphors collectively to the community. That he did so may be partly due to the fact that *nêšêr* is thus employed in *Isa.* lx: 21, with reference to Israel; but it may also be due to the realization on the part of the author of the hymn that *gêza'* is not used in the plural in biblical Hebrew and occurs in a clearly collective sense in *Isa.* xl: 24.

The second volume, which contains the notes, is admirable. The author

here justifies the translation of the texts in the first volume and discusses briefly the translational and interpretative problems which naturally arise from time to time. In the annotations to each manuscript there are ample cross references to related passages in other parts of the Qumran literature, and particular emphasis is laid on the links with the Hebrew Bible. Very valuable, too, are the numerous brief and up-to-date references to further literature; these greatly add to the usefulness of this work. The author apologizes in the preface for the brevity of the notes, but this feature seems to the reviewer an attractive one. Full scale commentaries are often more verbose than instructive, and the conciseness of the work under review (which was apparently stipulated by the publishers) is in keeping with its character of a handy tool to be used by the reader for the purpose of further independent inquiry.

In a work of this kind cool and balanced judgment is essential, and there is little or no room for the propagation of extreme views. So we find that the author, although taking account of a great variety of interpretations, tends on the whole to favour fairly conservative views. Thus Dr. Maier rejects—rightly, I think—the Messianic interpretation of *gèbhèr* in *IQS* iv. 20. As far as *IQH* is concerned, the author thinks that the 'I', generally speaking, is individual but, like the 'I' of the biblical psalms, is a literary convention and therefore something *rein Formales*; these compositions were, moreover, probably not written by one man, but very likely reflect a literary activity over a longish period (see vol. i, p. 71). All this is of course implicitly directed against the well known interpretation of the 'I' proposed by A. Dupont-Sommer and a few others which need not be repeated here. Also worthy of note is the author's cautious and, possibly, even negative attitude to the question of the importance of the 'Scrolls' for the study of the New Testament. In the blurb of the jacket of vol. i we read that 'auch die möglichen Beziehungen zum Neuen Testament bleiben nicht unerwähnt', the *litotes* apparently implying that Dr. Maier does not attach too much importance to the bearing of the Qumran manuscripts on early Christianity; and this impression is confirmed by a careful perusal of the work as a whole.

There is a very good bibliography, a most valuable concordance, and the usual (quite indispensable) reference tables.

P. WERNBERG-MØLLER

DOV YARDEN, *The Cantos of Immanuel of Rome* [*Maḥberoth 'Immanu'el Ha-romi*], edited on the basis of early manuscripts and printed editions, with Introduction, Commentary, Source references, Appendixes, and Indexes. The Bialik Institute, Jerusalem 1957, 2 vols., pp. xliii + 605.

Just as the most popular Hebrew *Maqamāt* composed in the Iberian Peninsula were those of Judah Alḥarizi, so the *Maḥbaroth*—not *cantos*, but *sessions* or convivial poems—of Immanuel b. Solomon Ṣifroni, or Manocello Romano, came to be the most widely read book of its kind

from the pen of an Italian Jew. Its 28 chapters include a variety of subject matter wide enough to have provided something to interest every *connoisseur* of wit, all being clothed in an allusive style peculiar to this *genre*. The book, which reveals a many-sided personality, is as fresh to-day as it was 600 years ago when the aged author composed it as a framework for his poems. These include epigrams of cynicism and of down-to-earth common sense; moralisings, amongst them some brilliant versions, in quatrains, of familiar material such as the *Sefer Ha-'aloth* of Shem-Tov Falaquera; prayers in poetical form; and a long didactic theological piece, אפתח בכנור על עלמות שיר, which is but an extended paraphrase of the classical hymn on the Thirteen Divine Attributes, *Yigdal 'elohim hai*, by Immanuel's contemporary Daniel b. Judah Ha-Dayyan. His serious vein is represented furthermore by some *sirventes*-like poems, eulogies, and contemplative pieces, while one poem deals with the coming of the Messiah. According to his own evidence Immanuel wrote all these in maturity, when he had repented of the follies of his youth—by which he means *erotica*, satires, some poems to patrons and friends, and one on the power of wine.

The most characteristic trait of Immanuel's work is his ability to juggle with ambiguities and his dexterity in the use of form—e.g. echo poems, rhetorical pieces one of which may be so read as to contain opposite meanings, and epigrams that make sense even when read backwards. His *tour-de-force* is a compilation of hundreds of questions on the nature of the months, constellations, biblical figures, women, etc., in which the rhyming (and often biting) *ripostes* are formed by biblical quotations. For example, תחת? תחת, אן דרך החושקים להיות נחים? אחד השיחה.

The poems are written in quantitative metres (most of them in the traditional distich forms). Of the four exceptions one is an adaptation (identified as such by Cassuto) of the *Serventese del maestro di tutti l'arti* by Rugieri Apugliese. He also composed, in a similar style, a lively and impressionistic poem in Italian entitled *Bisbidis*, which describes the hubbub of a crowded Veronese holiday. Perhaps his main merit was the bold introduction into Hebrew of the sonnet form, by means of which a new link with Italian culture was forged. In embarking on this innovation he had to determine appropriate metrical forms as well, and the ones chosen by him for his 38 sonnets were followed for hundreds of years by Hebrew sonneteers.

When in 1318 Immanuel arrived at Fermo, in central Italy, he was welcomed as a wandering scholar, teacher, and poet by an enthusiastic but anonymous patron who wished to be immortalised as "the prince" of the *Maḥbaroth*, which were completed in his home in 1328. The latter do not take the form of an anecdote as framework, like the traditional *maqāma*, but consist of a series of dialogues each of which centres round a theme determined by the poems which Immanuel had already composed. The connecting matter in rhymed prose, is skillfully and richly interwoven, with biblical fragments, together with allusions to rabbinic literature. Whilst some of these chapters clearly evince a novelistic character others serve merely as a flimsy introduction to the

poems. The final chapter is *sui generis*: this *Book of Hell and Paradise* (*mahbereth ha-Tofeth weha-'eden*) describes an imaginary voyage on the part of the author, guided by Daniel. It is a Jewish version of Dante's *Comedy*, and in contrast to the rest of the book contains no poems at all.

Of the work 10 MSS have been found—some complete, some fragmentary, and all faulty and of wide variation amongst themselves; none of them can be ascribed to copyists working from an authentic copy or holograph. The *editio princeps* (by Soncino, Brescia, 1492) is also valuable testimony to the text, though itself full of errors and unpunctuated. Soncino's son attempted an improved edition (Constantinople, 1535); here the poems were at least vocalised, arranged in their proper strophic forms, and in each case preceded by a description of the metre. It is noteworthy that the *shewa* is inserted in this edition at those points only where it is metrically significant—a prudent convention of former centuries not adopted in modern times except in the translations of Jabotinsky. But the editor, in an excess of zeal, allowed many unjustified emendations and additions to creep in. The third edition appeared in Berlin (1796), and again contained lines, and indeed complete poems, from the pen not of Immanuel but of the editor, that gifted stylist Isaac Satanow. The *Book of Hell and Paradise* has also been printed as a separate entity several times; being untinted by frivolities, it was exempted from the ban placed upon the book as a whole by orthodox circles.

H. Brody was the first scholar to attempt a reconstruction of the text, on the basis of the first edition and two MSS (in New York and Parma) which represent a family of which the oldest is the Paris MS, not used by Brody, who had at his disposal no example of the third group of MSS. The first volume of his (unfinished) work came out in 1926, covering chaps. 1-8, with notes. It was not till 1950 that a complete edition appeared, edited by A. M. Habermann. Aiming at a wide public, he vocalised the text completely, although omitting punctuation marks, and added a very brief commentary. Recently another scholar, Dov Yarden, has undertaken the preparation of what was intended to be a definitive edition. It must be stated at once that, in the reviewer's opinion, he has not succeeded in the task which he set himself, but one must in fairness add that tasks of this kind require teamwork, the financing of which is a most urgent *desideratum* of research work on Hebrew literature.

The new edition is, judged by several criteria, far better than any of its predecessors: the fruit of much industrious scholarship and wide knowledge, it has been handsomely produced by the Bialik Institute. Source material (of a lexicographical kind) and a short commentary are printed below the text, which is based on the comparison of all known manuscripts. This collation is the more valuable since both Brody and Habermann had relied upon the MS belonging to the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York—a calligraphical masterpiece whose scribe was more interested in his art than in his text. (It is worth making the point that such MSS nevertheless have their critical

value, since they tend to preserve their immediate *Vorlage* without multiplying new mistakes).

Yarden prints an eclectic text. In his opinion the known MSS are independent of each other: but unfortunately he provides us with insufficient critical evidence to substantiate his view (he has no more than six pages on the recensions). Being unfamiliar with the conventions of modern textual criticism he has worked out a somewhat unorthodox method of his own, trying to combine stylistic material with the philological. Work of this kind needs a wide basis of general literary equipment: in the reviewer's opinion, the ideal solution would be to have a very detailed critical essay dealing comparatively with the literary aspects; a text, prepared collaboratively by philologists and literary historians; and a commentary, combining the philological and literary points of view. Wherever a given literary form occurs, the requirements of that form are primary for the fixation of the text; the philological source material, such as (in the present instance) biblical and post-biblical vocabulary, are naturally also relevant, and of these criteria Yarden has made extensive use. But even when an editor prides himself on having found the only correct and thus conclusive version of the text by paying regard to the structural development of the poem, he ought not therefore to find it superfluous (as Yarden finds it) to present the reader with his evidence.

Yarden is primarily a philologist, and consequently some literary subtleties have on occasion escaped him. On the other hand his gift of keen logical analysis has enabled him to detect the correct meaning of many passages which the previous editors had misunderstood. Sometimes it is a matter of correcting but a single word in order to make a whole passage intelligible; elsewhere, the remedy lies with the insertion of the correct punctuation—the determination of which constitutes perhaps as much as 50% of the commentary on the text. Elsewhere an unusual meaning has to be recognised in a word. For example, in the chapter on *Questions and Answers* there occurs the line: התאמר על חובלים החובלים מזמור? שבו לכם פה עם החמור. חובלים is *sailors*, and the question naturally arises why sailors should be expected to "stay with the ass". This prompted the emendation סבילים, *porters* (Abrunin, *'Iyyunim be-shirath 'Immanuel Ha-romi, Leshonenu* xv, 5707 1947, p. 184). Yarden has, however, hit upon an interesting interpretation fully in the spirit of the author's ideas of humour. In his opinion חובלים is a term coined (perhaps, it might be added, already current when Immanuel used it) to designate the members of the Franciscan Order, as a Hebrew translation-equivalent of the Italian *cordiglieri* in the sense of *ascetic monks* who were so nicknamed because of the *cordiglio* worn by them at the waist. Now the Friars used to sing the hymns (מזמור) of the saint while humbly travelling around on donkeys. Immanuel therefore poses the question "Do you want a hymn on the *cordiglieri*?" and caps it with a biblical quotation (*Gen.* xxii: 5), "Stay ye here with the ass".

The chapter of *Questions and Answers* sets an editor some baffling problems, such as the right order of the verses (of this Yarden attempts

no solution) and the authenticity of nearly 60 of them. These are included by Yarden on the strength of their occurrence in two MSS—a circumstance which suggests that they stem not from Immanuel himself but from some scribe or ambitious client. Since they offer puns not inferior to those found in the remainder, they constitute an interesting addition: but it is questionable whether they ought to have been included in the text proper.

One field in which the editor's diligence has succeeded in clearing up textual difficulties is that of astrology—a *sine qua non* of any mediaeval product whose author cherished aspirations—by reference to which Yarden has been able to make sense of sentences that hitherto seemed to be a mere jumble of misunderstood words. As has already been stated, the commentary takes the form of brief footnotes. The reader would have profited more from the great store of knowledge accumulated by Yarden during his years of research had this—useful and necessary guide as it is—been complemented by a few explanatory chapters on mediaeval lore and custom, the characteristics of the author's style, and many other questions that inevitably crop up in a work of this kind. It is a matter for regret that most Hebrew scholars still regard the accumulation of extensive material from parallels etc. as a satisfactory method of stylistic analysis.

A minor attempt at collaboration was made by inviting Lea Goldberg, the poetess, to supply new and improved versions of Manoello's few known poems in Italian. The renderings of the sonnets are not outstanding; but the happy translation of the impressionistic poem *Bisbidis* merits the highest praise. The introduction contains a biographical sketch of Immanuel and his times. It would have gained from the contribution that a scholar interested primarily in European thought and literature in the 14th century might have supplied.

PNINA NAVÈ

LOUIS JACOBS, *Rabbi Moses Cordovero: The Palm Tree of Deborah*, translated from the Hebrew, with an introduction and notes. Vallentine, Mitchell, London, 1960, pp. 133.

Since the sixteenth century, cabbalistic *musar* has formed a significant part of the great bulk of moral and ascetic literature catering for the *homo iudaeus religiosus*. Some of the works in this branch are monumental encyclopaedias of mystical homiletics and ascetic theology; others commended themselves by their very simplicity. Curiously enough, one of the best-known and most popular tracts in the latter group, the *Tomer Devorah*, was written by the most difficult and profound among speculative cabbalistic thinkers, Moses Cordovero. The popularity of his short ascetic manual is attested by the fact that, to date, more than forty editions have appeared (Dr. Jacobs, in his introduction p. 16, mentions ten only). Even non-cabbalistic pietism, as cultivated under the influence of Israel Lipkin of Salant, used *The Palm Tree* as a text for edification and meditation. Since, however, the work is cabbalistic *musar*, some acquaintance with basic cabbalistic doctrine is necessary

in order to master the point of the book. The translator has therefore devoted part of his long introduction (pp. 9-45) to an exposition of the doctrinal background. Yet both the introduction and the translation of the text may cause some readers to wonder whether Dr. Jacobs has not fallen between two stools. Evidently not even the most sanguine enthusiast for cabbalistic studies would ever suggest that cabbalism constitutes a relevant, or even a meaningful religious option for twentieth-century Jewry—at any rate not for that section of it which has to resort to translations for edification and *musar*. Hence an English edition of the *Tomer Devorah* would have to be one of two things: either a strictly academic exercise in precision of rendering, exhaustiveness of analysis and fullness of apparatus, or else an addition to the library of semi-popular, historico-religious *belles lettres*. Though Dr. Jacobs could easily have chosen the first course, he evidently did not wish to do so. For one thing, his introduction is obviously designed for the benefit of the layman who requires an elementary account of the most necessary cabbalistic notions. Not the slightest attempt has been made to present Cordovero's own system as distinct from that of the *Zohar* or that of other authors. The translation, too, is very free, being more concerned with conveying the general tenor of the book than with philological precision. Thus at the beginning of the *Tomer* (p. 46, l. 3) the phrase "the chief Supernal image and likeness is in deeds etc." stands instead of "the main thing about the Supernal image is its actions; hence what does it profit a man if he resembles the Supernal form in the shape of his body but not in his deeds?". On p. 50 (line 1) the word "tolerance" sounds so modern as to be almost misleading. "Forbearance" would perhaps be more adequate, and a more careful translation would have attempted to bring out that the same Hebrew root (*sbl*) is used where the present text renders "tolerance" (l. 1), "patience" (l. 4), "he bears with him" (l. 7).

The second paragraph on the same page concludes with a consideration designed to prevent the relapse of the penitent sinner. Since it is God Himself who washes away the filth (why the euphemistic translation "stain" for Hebr. *ṣo'ah*?) of our sins, "therefore a man should be ashamed to sin again". (Dr. Jacobs: "From this one can learn the depth of shame in sinning"). On p. 53 the beginning of the second paragraph really forms the conclusion of the preceding one: "thus by virtue of the share which every [Israelite] has in the soul of his fellow [-Israelite], he is a surety for him, and hence they are all related to each other".

These few examples, picked from the first few pages of the translation, are sufficient to show that the rendering, though conveying very successfully a fair idea of what it is all about, is too loose for scholarly purposes in the more narrow, academic sense; it certainly fails to reflect nuances and shades of meaning. A mistranslation of a technical term seems to occur on p. 115 (see also Introduction, p. 11) where *gerushin* is rendered by "divorces". The term should rather be translated "peregrinations" or "exilewanderings".

As a Jewish contribution to the flourishing *genre littéraire* of popular

translations of religious and spiritual classics, this English version of the *Tomer Devorah* certainly fulfills a valuable function; but if this was in fact the editors' object, the introduction ought perhaps have been conceived on somewhat different lines, and the bibliography (pp. 123-30) seems oddly out of place; it is either gravely inadequate or unnecessarily pretentious. But however that may be, Dr. Jacobs has performed a service of no small significance for those unable to read Hebrew texts. The *Tomer Devorah* is as good an example as any of the application of the principle of *imitatio dei* in terms of cabbalistic piety (see Dr. Jacobs' remarks in his introduction, p. 18 ff.). The present publication enables a wider public to acquaint itself with the form which this fascinating religious and moral principle has taken in one particular type of Jewish spirituality.

Z. W.

THE INSTITUTE OF JEWISH STUDIES, LONDON
(formerly at Manchester)

University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.

The following Research Papers were read in the Autumn Term 1961/62 on Wednesdays at 5.15 p.m. in the Mocatta Library, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.

- 25th October: Various scholars: Reviews of recent works in Jewish Studies.
- 1st November: S. M. STERN (Oxford): The Hebrew literary scene between Bible and Mishnah.
- 8th November: J. G. WEISS (London): *Via negativa* in early Hasidism.
- 15th November: E. WIESENBERG (London): Aspects of the Yom Kippur Liturgy.
- 22nd November: S. LOWY (Leeds): Abraham Abulafia's relationship to the *Moreh Nebhukhim*.
- 31st January: GEO WIDENGREN (Uppsala): Oral tradition and written transmission in early Post-Biblical Judaism and in early Christianity.

A Seminar was held on

DOCUMENTS AND TEXTS OF THE BAR KOKHBA PERIOD
NEWLY FOUND IN THE DEAD SEA CAVES

by

Professor YIGAL YADIN

of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem,
during the Second Term 1961/62 on Wednesdays at 5.15 p.m.

- 7th February: General Introduction. The Nabatean documents.
- 14th February: The Aramaic documents prior to Bar Kokhba's times.
- 21st February: The Hebrew and Aramaic documents from the Bar Kokhba period.
- 28th February: The Bar Kokhba letters.
- 7th March: Summing up; conclusions.

J. G. Weiss

SOCIETY FOR JEWISH STUDY

Among recent public lectures given under the auspices of the Society have been the following:

PROFESSOR D. D. RAPHAEL:

"The Idea of Justice."

PROFESSOR D. WINTON THOMAS:

"The 'New' Vocabulary of Ancient Hebrew."

DR. ERWIN I. J. ROSENTHAL:

"Impressions of North African Jewry."

PROFESSOR BERNARD LEWIS:

"The Jews in the Ottoman Empire."

The annual general meeting was held on June 5, 1962, in the Montefiore Hall of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, Lauderdale Road, W. In the annual report it was stressed that the Society represented all religious trends in the community, and that the corporate membership included Orthodox, Reform and Liberal synagogues, as well as B'nai B'rith Lodges.

The programme of the Manchester Branch is obtainable from its Hon. Secretary, Mrs. L. Shields, 10 Shawdene Rd., Northenden, Manchester, 22.

July, 1962.

HUGH HARRIS, Chairman.